

chocolate croissants

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/30092271) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/30092271>.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	Choose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Minecraft (Video Game) , Video Blogging RPF , Dream SMP
Relationship:	GeorgeNotFound/Sam Awesamdude , GeorgeNotFound & TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Sam Awesamdude & TommyInnit , past george / dream , GeorgeNotFound & Niki Nihachu , Alexis Quackity & GeorgeNotFound , Sam Awesamdude & Toby Smith Tubbo , GeorgeNotFound & Toby Smith Tubbo , GeorgeNotFound & Sapnap (Video Blogging RPF)
Character:	GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF) , Sam Awesamdude , TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Clay Dream (Video Blogging RPF) , Sapnap (Video Blogging RPF) , Alexis Quackity , Niki Nihachu , Fran , Toby Smith Tubbo , Luke Punz
Additional Tags:	Hurt/Comfort , Happy Ending , Hurt GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF) , Hurt TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Protective Sam Awesamdude , Protective GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF) , Protective TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Parental Sam Awesamdude , my gift for the mcyt shipping brainrot discord server , Muah , Trauma , Suicidal Thoughts , brief and not in detail , georgenotfound is asleep, but not willingly , Not Canon Compliant , Warden Sam Awesamdude , NO SHIPPING MINORS , problematic shippers go away pls , GeorgeNotFound-centric (Video Blogging RPF) , Family Dynamics , dad georgenotfound , awesamdad , Temporary Character Death , Not Actually Unrequited Love
Language:	English
Collections:	Completed stories I've read , DSMP Fics I adore - Mainly about Tommy because that boy is my - traumatized - comfort character ☺ , ctommy , ctommy chomolo chommy , to read or not to read that is the question , Dream SMP: in my heart:)
Stats:	Published: 2021-03-17 Completed: 2021-05-26 Chapters: 11/11 Words: 45878

chocolate croissants

by [karumbled \(saquashing\)](#)

Summary

george wakes up from a deep sleep, rescues a child from his psychopathic ex-best friend, then adopts said child with his old roommate

Notes

4th work in the samnotfound tag pog

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Chapter 1

Sharp pains shot through George's temples as he slowly peeled open his eyes, taking multiple attempts to open his eyelids completely. It took a moment for him to adjust to the bright sunlight of the room he was in, the light spilling from the window next to him and onto his face like a spotlight, making the pounding in his head even worse.

He blinked the residual blurriness from his eyes, clearing his throat and slowly sitting up, cringing at how his back cracked when he stretched. He laid in a worn, beige bed and a soft white comforter strewn over him haphazardly. What he assumed was a once fluffy pillow was matted and flat from the weight of his head.

A nightstand sat next to him, paint chipping and wood warping from old age, giving it a vintage look. On top of which, laid a small picture frame, the image inside tinted various shades of yellows and oranges.

Upon closer inspection, he noticed it was the Dream Team, way back when they finished the construction of the community house. He couldn't help the soft smile that tugged his lips, and with a tired hand, he reached for the frame.

Residual foggiess clouded his mind as he stared at the image. His head tilted, looking from the frame to the door of the room, which remained shut, wind whistling from the crack underneath.

His eyes widened and his mouth dropped, heart thundering in his chest. He had no idea where he was, or how he even got there.

The picture frame clattered onto the ground, glass shattering, though he couldn't hear it over his heavy breaths. He grabbed the comforter and threw it off of him, wincing as the chill air hit his skin.

The last thing he remembered was venting to Dream about the state of his house. His nose curled as he remembered the smell of burnt mushroom and wood. What happened?

Flashes of Dream talking to Tubbo, no, yelling at Tubbo, rang through his mind. But past that, it was blank. His throat constricted, his stomach dropping as he realized what Dream did. It wasn't the first time that the man decided he needed to 'rest', forcing him asleep like some creepy fairytale and locking him away, under the guise of keeping him safe.

It was usually for hours, the longest ever being days unconscious, left with no control over his own body or mind. Every time it happened he begged for Dream to stop, told him that he didn't like it, and every time Dream would apologize, wrap him in a hug and tell him that he was making the best decision possible. The worst part was, George always forgave him. He looked down at his hands, thin and pale from the lack of proper food and exercise. A small kindle sparked deep inside of him, feeding the tiniest of rebellious urges. He was going to kill Dream.

Okay, not actually kill him, but he was going to find him, and yell -- a lot. He had no right to take away his bodily-autonomy, drugging him and locking him away for what *he* thought was best. Tears of frustration pooled beneath his eyelids, threatening to spill with every shaky breath. He took a small step forward, his legs feeling weak from their lack of use.

He wondered how long he had been out that time, but from how his legs were screaming beneath his weight, it had to have been at least a week. The thought made him sick. He didn't like missing

out on what was happening on the SMP, he wanted to be able to pick sides, make friends, and get involved in politics, like everyone else.

He thought back to the first time it had happened. The election. He had actually been excited to be involved in something for once, Quackity was too. They had the debate in the courthouse, and it was the most fun George had in a long time. He grew to like Quackity, too, no matter how much he hated to admit it. But then Dream stepped in, saying they needed to talk.

George didn't remember the conversation, he just remembered waking up to Quackity, yelling and cursing at him in Spanish. It took forever to make it up to the then vice-president. But then it happened again, before the festival.

Like clock-work, Dream asked to see him privately, then hours later he woke up with a headache and stories of massacre via fireworks. That's when he put two and two together, realizing that Dream was the cause of his slumber.

"I did you a favor, George, you didn't want to be there," Is what he said. Looking at the soot-stained stage the next day, he couldn't say he disagreed. But then it kept happening, and he knew that he would rather make his own mistakes than let someone else make his choices.

It kept happening though, and despite his better instincts, he kept crawling back to Dream. Looking at his reflection in the window, he caught his eye, scowling at his sunken eyes and chapped lips, an unpleasant burning filling his chest. He knew why he kept going back to the man, and why he kept forgiving him.

He was in love with him, and even though it was misguided, Dream's attempts to keep him safe were almost... sweet, in a sick way. Dream was right, he was just doing what he thought was best. Still, he couldn't get past the violation of trust that was putting him to sleep without his consent. He needed to talk to him, so they could discuss this, and hopefully move on.

He sighed, leaning on the backs of his heels and pinching the bridge of his nose, "God, I'm such a simp," he muttered, his voice cracking. He turned and walked to the door, the handle chill against his palm.

Last he remembered, it was early fall, why was it cold outside?

He let it go and opened the door, wincing as the hinges creaked. The wind was biting, nipping at his exposed skin. He wished Dream at least left him a hoodie, he thought bitterly as he rubbed his arms. Looking around, he realized that he wasn't in the usual place Dream stashed his unconscious body. This time he was in an actual structure, hidden in the woods. He had no idea where he was.

He rolled his eyes, suppressing his groan. Of course, Dream put him in the middle of nowhere, not even bothering to leave him a map. It was like he wasn't expecting him to wake up. He knew that couldn't be the case, though. Dream always planned ahead extensively, leaving nothing up to chance.

Taking a step forward, he realized he didn't have shoes. Dried leaves and grass stuck to his sock-covered feet, but he knew he didn't want to stay there, waiting for Dream to come to save him. He had *some* dignity left.

The best he could do right then was hope he wasn't too far from the SMP, and that the walk was smooth. Looking to the sky, he noted the position of the sun. He had about two hours before it set completely, and from the trajectory, he quickly figured out which way was north and headed off in that direction.

It took about an hour for the bright lights of L'Manburg to catch his eye, a relieved smile tugging his lips as he thought for a moment that he'd have to sleep under the stars. His feet were aching, his legs were burning and his lungs felt seconds away from giving up, but the sight of L'Manburg filled him with renewed energy, making the last stretch of his travels pass by a lot quicker.

Only when he stepped onto the wooden path did he realize how insane he must look, shoeless, coatless, a week's worth of bedhead and in sweats. He ignored the stares, spotting Niki and rushing towards her. They weren't the closest, but she had always been friendly, even when they were on opposing sides.

"Niki!" He called, smiling as he approached the blonde. Her eyes widened as she took in George's disheveled appearance, looking around nervously before ushering him into a building, "What's wrong?" He asked, his head tilting as she looked out the windows, seemingly to make sure no one saw them enter.

"What are you doing here?" She rushed, though it was clear there was no venom behind the words, just concern and confusion, "Where have you been? Are you okay?"

George's eyebrows furrowed, his lips pulling into a frown, "What are you talking about, I'm fine," he replied, his stomach twisting with anxiety. As angry as he was about Dream, he didn't like the idea of other people knowing about their drama. He was a private man, after all. They wouldn't understand the nature of their friendship. They had disagreements, sometimes, but he still cared for Dream, he was his best friend. It was just a misunderstanding.

"You've been missing for a month, George," She replied, watching him carefully.

George's eyes shot open, and he had to swallow the bile down from his throat, the room was spinning around him, "George?" She asked, noticing how quick his breathing became, and placed a gentle hand on his wrist.

"A month?" He croaked, tears welling in his eyes, his hands shaking, "I've been asleep for a month?"

Niki faltered, her mouth dropping open in surprise, "You've been... asleep?" She asked, "For a month?"

George exhaled sharply, running a hand through his hair, taking a second to breathe before answering, "It doesn't matter," he said, brushing past the explanation he knew she wanted, but didn't have the energy to give. She wouldn't understand, she would think Dream is a bad person, "I need to talk to Dream? Do you know where he is?"

At the mention of Dream, Niki's nose curled and she took a step back. Okay, apparently she already thought he was a bad person.

"You really don't know, do you?"

"Know what?" He asked, his irritation growing with each passing second. This was the worst part of when Dream put him to sleep, he was always left out of the loop and left looking like an idiot.

"After Dream exiled Tommy, Tubbo banned him from L'Manburg," She explained softly, giving him a second to process what she was saying. "He was trying to manipulate them, we all assumed you were on his side, we've been looking for you."

George couldn't breathe, the tsunami of information was drowning him, overwhelming him, suffocating him. He missed a month. Not only that, but Tommy was exiled, and Dream was

starting problems with Tubbo.

He thought for sure that after the last war, Dream would be leaving them alone. He promised he would. He said that it would be over, and they would be happy. He felt like a knife had been stabbed through his back, piercing his heart.

Thinking about Tommy in exile, separated from Tubbo, the knife twisted. They were best friends, and most importantly, they were just kids, “Why did he put Tommy in exile?” He asked, chewing his lips, “Where is he now? Can I see him?”

“Oh George, you don't have a clue,” She laughed, bitter, “Tommy’s in exile for what happened to your house,” Niki explained, running a hand over her face, “He’s still there, Dream promised he would kill him if he sets foot in the SMP or L’Manburg, even after he was banned himself.”

George gasped, a hand flying to his mouth and his eyes widening to the size of saucers. This was all *his* fault. He didn’t want Dream to do anything about his house, all he wanted was someone to comfort him, and maybe help him rebuild. This was too far. This was insane.

His knees buckled beneath him, slamming into the ground as he fell against it with a cry. This wasn’t Dream, this couldn’t be the same man who fought to keep him safe. How could he do that, and to a child? He never really got along with the boy, but that’s all he was. A boy.

Niki came to his side, rubbing a hand over his shoulder, “You’ve been gone a while, George,” She said softly, “There’s a lot you haven’t seen.”

He closed his eyes, ignoring the hot tears spilling down his cheeks. A part of him wished he stayed asleep.

After his breakdown with Niki, George set off. Both to find him some proper clothes and to fix everything he had ruined. The thought of Tommy, alone, because of him -- God, it made him feel nauseous.

He didn’t try to avoid Dream, or the places they used to hang out, though the thought of seeing him made bile rise in his throat, but a large part of him was afraid of seeing his friend. He had never been one for confrontation, and he didn’t trust himself not to go crawling back to him at the first fake apology and empty promise.

The first thing he needed to do was find Tommy. Niki had told him the vague area of where he was living now, far, far away. But there was a pathway, she said, through the nether, that was a lot quicker.

He needed to make sure he was okay, and that Dream hadn’t hurt him. Dream wouldn't hurt him right? Did he even know what he was truly capable of? Clearly he had kept a lot from him. He felt like his entire world was shifting beneath his feet.

The sun was setting, but there was no way in hell he was sleeping that night. After he got some basic supplies; shoes, a weapon, and some food, he set off towards the portal.

He always hated traveling through portals, no matter how often he did it, he never got used to it. The nauseating purple, or what he was told was purple, always made his eyes hurt and his stomach churn.

Not to mention that the nether was literally hell, or at least the closest thing to it. It was hot, almost everything tried to kill you, and it smelt awful, like sulfur and rotting flesh.

Following Niki's directions, he went off in what he was 90 percent sure was the right way. Okay, 85. Still, he ignored the anxiety that filled his chest, and the doubt in the back of his head, pretending like he wasn't afraid.

He had no idea what he was going to do when he found Tommy, he just knew he wouldn't be able to relax until he saw the teenager alive and well. Hell, maybe he was happy in his new house, plenty of room to build ugly cobblestone towers. Maybe, he would go there and they would have a friendly conversation, and George could leave with a peace of mind.

As much as he wanted to believe that, he knew it wasn't true. Something told him there was something dreadfully wrong about what was happening in exile, and his protective instinct took over. He never thought of himself as the protective, mama-bird type, but here he was, setting off to make sure a *child* was okay. And not just a child, *Tommy*.

He dodged the groups of piglins and stray ghasts with ease, used to dealing with them from exploring with Dream and Sapnap.

He didn't know how much time passed before he found the right portal, the time passage was different in the nether, and he still didn't really have a grasp on it.

Bracing himself, he stepped into the portal, praying and pleading to every god he didn't believe in that he would step through and that everything would be alright.

He should have known better, nothing ever turned out the way he wanted.

Once the nausea wore off from traveling back to the overworld, the scent of gunpowder hit him like a truck, burning his nose and sticking in his throat.

He continued forward, swallowing thickly and following a path to the top of a small hill, that's when his breath was ripped from his lungs and his mouth dropped open.

A couple yards in front of him was a massive crater, the remnants of a structure still smoking and ash billowing from the hole.

Dread slammed into him like a train. Did Tommy make it out?

Tears filled his eyes, and his heart dropped. There was no sign of the teenager anywhere.

He fell to his knees for the second time that day.

Years of little things he had refused to think about flooded his head, plaguing his heart and mind. The battle for L'Manburg, Tommy and Tubbo were so young then. He should have stopped Dream, he should have kept them safe. He thought about the duel, how he didn't blink at the teenager risking his life for his country, too focused on making sure Dream was okay.

And now it was too late.

A sob wracked through his chest, broken pleas falling past his lips. He had always put Dream first, and look where that got him, waking up after a month-long slumber and kneeling over the spot where he probably murdered a child.

His lungs burned and his heart thundered in his chest, what was he going to do? How was he supposed to explain this to Niki, she was just as worried as him, if not more.

"George?"

He turned around sharply, crying out in relief as he laid eyes on the blonde in question. His eyes were red, he was covered in ash and he seemed scared, but he wasn't physically hurt.

George pushed himself off of the ground, not even thinking before rushing towards the blonde and wrapping his arms around him. Tommy froze, for a moment, before slowly reciprocating the hug, trembling in his arms.

"What are you doing here, Gogy?" Tommy asked, his voice rough, thick with unshed tears. George pulled away, and that's when something caught his eye. A large tower, a little bit away from the destruction.

Meeting Tommy's eyes, George noted how defeated he looked, and how his gaze kept flicking to the wooden tower.

"Oh," He whispered, his eyes softening, "Oh, Tommy, no."

The blonde sniffled, his eyebrows furrowing as he looked to the ground, "Why are you here, George?" He whispered, anger clouding his voice, but he knew better. "Don't you hate me?"

"I don't hate you, Tommy," George replied, trying his best to come across as comforting, but he wasn't experienced when it came to this kind of thing. The fact that the teenager even thought that he hated him made his stomach feel like acid, he wasn't heartless after all, "I don't give a fuck about my mushroom house, it took me like an hour to make, it's fine."

"But- but Dream said you hated me," Tommy replied, his voice wavering as tears finally spilled down his cheeks, "and that you left the SMP because of it, because of me."

The spark in his gut rekindled, this time burning into the strength of a wildfire, all consuming and ready to destroy what little self-control he had left. He wondered how easy it would be to kill Dream, he did trust him after all.

"I was away from the SMP, yes," He explained, avoiding the reason, while trying his best to offer him a reassuring smile, though he was sure it didn't come across that way, "It wasn't because of you."

Tommy seemed to crumble at that, falling to the ground in a pit of sobs and unintelligible murmurs. George couldn't help but wonder what had happened to change the stubborn, fiery and well, annoying, teenager into *that*, a sobbing mess, with just a hug and a little bit of reassurance.

"I don't, I don't need your pity," Tommy mumbled, pushing himself away from George and wrapping his arms around himself, like a hug. George's protective instincts went on overdrive, and he fought the urge to embrace him again, but he didn't want to push him too far.

Instead, he sat by his side, looking at the destruction with contempt, "This isn't pity, Tommy," He said, digging through his pockets for a bar of chocolate Niki gave him, breaking it into two and holding a piece out to the teenager, waiting for him to take it before he continued, "I genuinely do care about you, I know we haven't really gotten along, but that doesn't mean you deserve... this."

Tommy stared at the piece of chocolate in his hand inquisitively, before plopping the entire thing in his mouth, the sweet cocoa seemingly soothing the blonde, "I thought he was my friend," He whispered, "But he was just visiting me to watch me."

George sighed, shaking his head with a clenched jaw. He didn't think about what he said next.

"Tommy, come live with me."

The blonde's head snapped towards him, eyes wide as he processed what George said.

"What?" He asked, disbelieving, "But, but I can't go to the SMP, and Dream- Dream would be mad."

"Fuck Dream," George said honestly, his respect for his friend burning in the crater along with Tommy's camp, "And as for the SMP, who said we were going there?"

Tommy's head tilted, "You don't have a house, where would we go?"

"I had the mushroom house, sure," George explained, smiling as an idea came to mind, "But that isn't the only place I ever lived."

"What are you talking about?" Tommy asked, his eyes squinting as he faced George, eyes puffy and rimmed with red, "Where did you live before?"

George didn't answer, he just stood up, offering his hand to the blonde, "Do you trust me?"

Tommy shrugged, "Not particularly," he admitted, though he took George's hand and stood up regardless.

"That's fair," George chuckled, leading him towards the portal he came through, "But will you come with me anyways?"

The blonde followed him, only faltering once, before the portal, biting his lip and his fingers fidgeting with his worn shirt, "Do you- do you promise you're not going to tell Dream I went in the nether?"

George's eyebrows furrowed, biting back the bile in his throat. What did Dream do to him to make him that afraid of going into the nether?

"Tommy," he said sternly, looking into his eyes so he knew he was telling the truth, "Dream will never come near you again, okay?"

The blonde rubbed his forehead for a moment, looking deep in thought, before eventually stepping forward, "Okay."

The trip in the nether took a lot longer this time around, both with Tommy behaving like a scared cat, and George not entirely sure where he was going, looking carefully for the familiar ice bridge.

He knew Sam would still have his room there, waiting for him. He said as much every time he asked him to come back. Looking back at Tommy, who was carefully crossing the path behind him, eyes bouncing around the nether with fear; he hoped Sam wouldn't mind the extra company.

"Where are we going?" Tommy asked, jumping when the cry of a ghast echoed throughout the hell dimension.

George rolled his eyes, "Nothing's going to hurt you, Tommy, just don't hit anything," he reminded, biting back the urge to laugh when a baby piglin ran by the blonde's side, making him jump, "And we're going to Sam's, have you ever been there?"

Tommy hummed, "Man's fucking insane with redstone," He sped up so he was next to George's side, "You know, considering how short you are, you're really fast."

George glared at the blonde, but let it go, "I used to have a room at Sam's place," he explained

half-heartedly, smiling when he saw the faint sight of the ice bridge in the distance, "He'll be happy to have us there. Besides, he's not on the SMP, is he?"

Tommy's lips broke out into a mischievous smile, noting the loophole, though it faltered as he thought more and more about George's solution, "Are you sure he won't mind me being there? There's not a whole lot of people who like me right now, George."

"That's ridiculous," George replied simply, guiding Tommy up the staircase to the bridge. He prayed no one came out of the portal just then, there would be no way to explain what he was doing, "Even if he *didn't* like you, which he does, he would still take you in."

"How did you meet him, anyways?" Tommy asked, changing the topic of conversation back to George, he noticed, but he let it slide.

"He was one of the original eight on the SMP," George explained, sighing in relief when he saw there was already a boat on the bridge, he didn't think to bring wood, "He's always been a good friend," He remembered fondly, "He was cracked at redstone, even then."

Tommy hummed, climbing into the wooden boat behind him. George didn't look over the sides, focusing in front of him. No matter how many times he crossed over the bridge, the sheer drop always made his skin crawl.

"How come he wasn't around for the wars and shit? If you guys were such good friends." Tommy asked. George took a second to answer, propelling them off of the side and onto the ice.

Once they got to a speed where George didn't have to push as hard anymore, he finally answered, wincing as he thought about why Sam left for a while, "Dream and Sam didn't always get along," he said carefully, "they both have very dominant personalities and different views on friendship."

Tommy scoffed, "what the hell is that supposed to mean?"

"It means they don't get along," George deadpanned, not in the mood to explain the group's past drama to the teen. What was in the past was in the past, and if he was being honest, he still felt guilty about what happened, "We're almost to the turn, hang on."

Although he seemed hesitant, Tommy eventually wrapped his thin arms around George, leaning his face against his back, though with how much taller he was it was more against his shoulder.

George tensed for a moment, before he heard the soft breathing of the blonde behind him, and he smiled as he realized he fell asleep.

His protective instincts squashed the sliver of annoyance within him as he realized Tommy must have been exhausted. He wondered when it was he slept last.

He slowed down the boat, taking as long as he could to cross the rest of the bridge to give him time to rest, holding as still as possible to not jostle the boy. But if anyone asked, he was just enjoying the view.

He let himself breathe, deeply, for the first time since he woke up from his month-long slumber. He had no idea where the protective instincts came from, but he stopped fighting them. Tommy may not have much of a family anymore, but neither did he. They could be there for each other.

George chewed the inside of his cheeks, eyes burning as they reflected the bright light of flowing lava. As much as he trusted Sam, and knew logically that he would never hurt them, he couldn't help but worry.

If Sam didn't take them in, he had no idea where they would go. But as he heard the soft mumbles of the sleeping teenager, clinging on his back like a koala, he knew he would figure it out.

It didn't take long for him to cross the rest of the bridge, and he dreaded waking Tommy up. Something told him he hadn't had good rest in a long time, and he wanted him to get some sleep.

He turned around slowly, bringing a hand to the blonde's shoulder and shaking gently, "Tommy," He whispered, "Tommy, come on, wake up."

The blonde slowly opened his eyes, blinking the sleep away and sitting up, stretching, "Sorry," He apologized, a sheepish smile tugging his lips and a faint blush on his cheeks.

"Don't be," George replied, making sure he sounded nonchalant, the last thing he wanted was for Tommy to feel like a nuisance, he wanted him to trust him. He stood from the boat, holding his hand out for the blonde to grab, helping him off the ice bridge before leading him onto the netherrack, "We're almost there, just have to go through this last portal."

Tommy nodded, rubbing the last of his short sleep from his eyes, yawning and stretching his arms above him, "I don't know why I'm so tired all of a sudden," He said, following George to the once hidden portal.

"It's been a long day," George nodded, waiting for Tommy to catch up to him before stepping through the obsidian portal.

When the overworld once again materialized around them, George looked around with wide eyes, clearly Sam had decided to do some building, adding a couple of large buildings, big and yellow, though he couldn't tell what they were for.

"Do you think he's home?" Tommy asked, walking with George to the smooth cliff face, where they both knew the secret entrance resided. George bit his lip, looking from the rock to Tommy and shrugging.

"I guess we'll find out," He said simply, walking closer to the secret door, "Is there a secret doorbell?"

"How am I supposed to know?" Tommy asked, following him closer to the wall, before taking a deep breath, "SAM?!" He yelled, as loud as he could, not stopping even when George recoiled and covered his ears, "SAMMM?!"

"Jesus Christ, Tommy!" George yelled, though he couldn't help but smile when the blonde burst into a fit of laughter, "Give me a heads up next time."

Before Tommy could shoot off a retort, someone cleared their throat behind them, making them both jump.

Out of pure instinct, George stepped in front of Tommy, ready to fight whoever interrupted them. However, when he looked up at Sam's creeper mask and tilted head, he relaxed.

"Uh, hi?" Sam greeted, looking between Tommy and George, balancing a pickaxe on his shoulder, "What's going on?"

"We need a place to stay," George said simply, not offering him any further explanations. He knew Sam, and from the way he was looking at them, discerning whether they needed help or not, he knew that the simple explanation was all he needed.

After a moment, Sam nodded, humming as he walked to the wall, bringing out his hoe and opening the door, motioning the two inside. George's shoulders sagged in relief.

Both Tommy and George gasped as they walked inside, eyeing the large cave in awe. It was clear that Sam had done a lot of remodeling since the last time George was there.

Large couches sat on the far wall, a nice aquarium next to them and a fireplace on the side. Both hallways were lined with doors, like Sapnap's and George's, presumably leading to other rooms filled with redstone contraptions George would never understand. The kitchen was far bigger, too, the once spruce countertops replaced with marble and granite.

"Can I ask why you need a place to stay, George?" Sam asked, walking behind him and placing a gentle hand on his shoulder, George jumped, and Sam apologized before moving it.

"I don't mind, of course, I just want to make sure you're both okay."

George's lips pulled into a small smile, widening as he faced back to Tommy and saw him light up as he saw Sam's dog, running towards it and petting it.

The sounds of the door sliding shut faded into the background, but George couldn't help but notice how as soon as it closed, he instantly felt safe. The perks of living in a wall far away from everyone else, he guessed.

"I shouldn't say," George replied, avoiding the thoughts of his forced comatose and the crater where Tommy used to live. He knew if Sam found out, Dream would be dead by the end of the night. Or worse, his ex? friend would hurt Sam, "But can I ask you to keep this a secret? Us staying here?"

Sam nodded, fingers twitching by his sides as he stopped himself from embracing George. He had always been affectionate, both physically and not, and it was clear he was trying to avoid making him feel uncomfortable.

The thought warmed George's heart, it had been so long since someone respected his boundaries, it was nice.

"Of course, stay as long as you need, both of you," He replied, "I'm glad you're back, honestly," he guided him down the corridor to where Tommy was kneeling by the dog, "I missed having roommates."

Tommy perked up as they got near, smiling wide as the dog licked the side of his face, "What's its name, big man?" He asked, eyes bright.

"Fran," Sam answered, sitting on one of the couches and leaning back, his arm wrapping over the back of the cushions, "She's a sweetheart, oldest pet on the server I think."

"Fran," Tommy repeated, laughing when the dog's head tilted at the use of her name, his own head involuntarily mimicking the action, blonde hair bouncing as he did so.

The fondness in George's chest doubled as he watched the teenager interact with the animal. He remembered Dream telling him stories of a cow, Henry, and how Tommy was attached to it. He was clearly an animal person. Maybe Fran could help him heal.

He sat next to Sam, leaving plenty of room between them. The last thing he wanted was to make him feel overwhelmed in his own home.

“So I’m not going to ask what happened, but I do have a question,” Sam said, making both George and Tommy tense. Sam leaned forward, slowly unclasping the creeper mask and setting next to his side.

George’s heart raced as he waited for him to continue, noticing how Tommy stopped petting Fran and was now rubbing his thighs, eyes wide and waiting, he could tell he was assuming the worst, too.

Finally, Sam continued.

“What do you want for dinner?”

George exhaled sharply, and Tommy slouched as he went back to playing with the dog.

Clearing his throat, George leaned back against the cushions, “Whatever you have is fine, Sam,” He assured, his eyelids feeling heavy as comfort replaced the adrenaline in his body. Tommy was safe, he was safe, he had accomplished all he set out to do, so where did he go from there?

Sam seemed to notice his fatigue, scooting closer to him ever so slightly and moving his hand from the back of the couch onto his shoulder, rubbing the exposed skin on the back of George’s neck, before he could even relax, the hand was gone. “You can go take a nap, if you’re tired George, your room is still in the same place.”

The thought of going back to sleep terrified George, just the suggestion of it sending a wave of anxiety through his chest. If he went to sleep, could he trust that he would wake up? Sam wouldn't do that to him, right? He trusted Sam. But then again, he trusted Dream.

He couldn't risk it, not when Tommy was relying on him, not when he had to make up for everything that had happened.

“No need, I'm not tired,” He stood up, stretching his arms above his head when a yawn escaped his throat.

Sam raised an eyebrow, crossing his arms over his chest as to say ‘Oh really?’ George glared at him, bending over to scratch behind Fran’s ears.

When he looked up he made eye contact with Tommy, who was chewing on his lip, then cleared his throat, motioning towards Sam.

“I'm going to go start dinner,” Sam said, taking the hint and heading to the kitchen. George sat down, grateful that he was so perceptive.

He waited for Tommy to start the conversation, petting the top of Fran’s head, not wanting to rush him.

Eventually, he spoke up, “Gogy -- George, are you, are you sure we can trust Sam?”

Tommy was coming to him, for validation, for comfort. A small part of George wanted to run, hide far away and stop this before it could really even start. Tommy trusted him, what if he screwed it up? He didn't have a clue as to what to do.

But he swallowed the doubt, and did his best to seem relaxed, though he was far from it, “If there's one thing that I'm sure of right now, Tommy,” He said, looking back to the Kitchen where Sam was nodding along to whatever song was stuck in his head while he cooked, “It's that he would never hurt us.”

The best, or should he say, weirdest, part of that sentence, was that he believed it. Whole-heartedly. In all of his years of being Sam's friend, he had only seen him angry once.

He sighed, pushing that memory far from his mind and focusing back on Tommy. He seemed far more relaxed now; George was glad.

He fought against the awkwardness, the anxiety of not knowing what to say, before nudging Tommy's side.

“You'll like him better after dinner, Sam's cracked at cooking, too, not just redstone.”

At the mention of food, Tommy's stomach growled, which George laughed at, loudly.

“Shut up, bitch,” Tommy whined, face red and mumbling curses under his breath, which made George laugh harder. Soon, however, Tommy joined in, and although the situation wasn't exactly *funny*, the ability to finally relax made them a bit hysterical.

“What's going on in here?”

George looked up to Sam, who was watching them with a warm smile. He wiped a stray tear from his eyes as he calmed down, his cheeks hurting. Tommy was still giggling, increasing when Fran got excited and started to lick him again.

“Nothing,” George replied, breathless, “Here, let me help you with the food.”

“Pfft, George sit back down, I have it under control.”

He opened his mouth to argue, but was interrupted when Sam continued.

“Besides, we both know you aren't exactly a chef...”

Tommy fell into another fit of laughter when George gasped, picking up a pillow and throwing it at the other man, who dodged it at the last moment, his own boisterous laughter filling the air.

It was warm, comforting. The laughter acting like medicine soothing a cold, or sitting in front of a fire after a long day in the snow. It felt like *home*.

Why did that scare George?

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

oo inconsistent chapter lengths

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

George eventually got up to help Sam set the table, Tommy refusing to leave Fran's side, even for a second. The dog was loving all of the attention, and George knew then he had made the right decision coming to Sam.

Honestly, he had forgotten about Fran before they showed up. But of course Sam would have a friendly dog, ready to shower a traumatized teenager in love and affection. Hopefully, she could give him some comfort and maybe help him feel less alone.

George shivered thinking about the predicament he had found Tommy in, shaking, all by himself, heading to that tower. It takes a lot to drive someone to that, to feeling so worthless and alone that that's the only way out they can see. It made his stomach churn.

Any time he started feeling in over his head, or like he was making a mistake, he thought about the tower. He got Tommy into that situation, he put him in danger, now he was going to keep him safe.

“George?”

He looked up, finally realizing he had been staring at the table, unmoving. He met Sam’s concerned gaze.

“Don't worry about it,” He answered, before he could even ask, “I'm fine.”

Sam hummed, moving to his side to put a bowl of salad on the table, “I know i'm not supposed to ask what happened,” George nodded, “But you know you can talk to me about anything, right? I want you both to feel comfortable here.”

“I know, Sam,” He replied, cheeks warm from the kindness that he hadn't had in a long time. Dream flirted with him, sure, but all of it felt so plastic, so pretend. And while Sapnap was one of his best friends too, most of what they did was argue.

“Thank you for letting us stay here,” He said earnestly, “I honestly don't know where else we would have gone, apparently things are a lot different than I thought.”

“What do you mean?”

George bit his lip, moving away from the table. "It doesn't matter."

He had to be more careful, it was only a matter of time before he slipped up and got himself into trouble. It wasn't just about protecting Dream, which was always his first instinct, but the fact that he *let* what happened to him happen was humiliating.

"Food's ready, Tommy," He called, hoping that Sam would let it go.

"When was the last time either of you ate?" Sam finally asked, his resolve to let them keep secrets breaking. He noticed their frail bodies as soon as he saw them, but as he watched them scarf down pork chops and salad, he wasn't able to brush past it.

Both Tommy and George shared a look, sharing a mutual desire to keep their secrets, but also wanting to know the others answer.

Finally, Tommy spoke up, a mischievous glint in his eyes and a stubborn smile tugging his lips, "George gave me chocolate."

George nodded vigorously, swallowing his mouthful of food before facing Sam, "He's right, we ate it earlier today -- or yesterday, I'm not actually sure how long we were in the nether."

"Okay..." Sam sipped his water, "So when was the last time you ate *real* food?"

George rolled his eyes as Tommy huffed. It was clear Sam wanted an answer, to this question at least, but how was he supposed to explain he hadn't eaten in a month, kept alive by whatever magic Dream used to put him into sleep?

"The last I checked, the chocolate was pretty real. Right, Tommy?" He couldn't lie, he too wanted to know more details of what happened to the teenager, but if it was anything like his situation, it couldn't be easy for him to talk about.

"Yeah, big man," Tommy agreed, readily teaming up with George to avoid answering Sam's questions, "Cocoa beans are very real, they grow on trees and shit."

Sam rolled his eyes, but he finally let it go, resigning to eat in peace and let the two keep their secrets. George was immensely grateful, and from his slight nod and smile in his direction, he hoped Sam could tell just how much.

"So, Tommy," Sam said, stabbing a piece of lettuce on his plate absentmindedly, "I think Sapnap's old room would be best suited for you, I don't think he slept in it once, honestly," Tommy nodded, "Plus, it's right across the hall from George."

"Why would that matter? I don't even like George." Tommy grumbled, fork stabbing a piece of meat on his plate as his cheeks dusted pink. It made George happy that despite everything, Tommy picked *him* to get attached to.

He wondered how Wilbur could stand to blow up L'Manburg, knowing he was leaving behind his brother, his family. He hadn't been by Tommy's side long, but already knew he would kill to keep him safe.

"Well, anyways, does Sapnap's room work for you?"

Tommy made a face, curling his nose in fake disgust, which George laughed at, but he agreed. He always enjoyed the nature of both his and Tommy's and Sapnap and Tommy's friendships before

all of this.

There was always plenty of teasing, lighthearted pranks, and occasionally a 'war' over pets. Though when Dream started picking very real fights with Tommy's older brother, Wilbur, the 'wars' turned into actual battles.

George missed Sapnap, he wondered where he was, if he left with Dream when he got banned from L'Manburg. He was just as loyal to Dream as he was, sticking by his friend no matter what. George admired that about him. He wanted to hear him making fun of him for protecting Tommy, or for going back to Sam. But most of all, he just hoped he was okay.

The trio finally separated for bed, heading into their respective rooms, Tommy's and George's closer, while Sam's was a bit down the hall, his door marked with green clay and terracotta.

As soon as George stepped into his room and the door shut behind him, his anxiety returned with a vengeance. His once homely bed taunted him, his lungs constricting and his fingers fidgeting with the hem of his shirt.

As tired as he was before, he was fully awake now. There was no way he was going to be able to sleep, not when he couldn't guarantee he would wake up in the same month. His breaths turned even shakier, and after a long minute, he turned around, opening the door yet again. He needed to get away from the bed, he needed room to breathe.

He froze in his place when he saw Tommy, curled up on one of the couches, arms wrapped around his knees, the same self-protecting placement as before. He wondered how long he had spent sitting like that.

"Tommy?" He whispered, half a mind as to not wake up Sam. The blonde's head tilted up, red puffy eyes meeting his. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing, Gogy," Tommy sniffled, wiping his nose on the sleeve of his shirt, "Go away."

George ignored his demand, and sat by his side. He stayed far enough away to let him breathe, but still close enough he knew he was there.

"Don't wanna sleep either?" George asked, leaning against the back of the couch, head tilted towards the ceiling.

Tommy sniffled. A beat of silence passed.

"Did I ever tell you how I met Sapnap?" He asked, already knowing the answer. He wasn't sure where he was going with this, only that he needed something to distract Tommy from whatever was plaguing his mind.

"I was young, we both were," He smiled fondly, remembering it like it was the day before, "I was about your age, actually."

Tommy tilted towards him, wiping his eyes and waiting for him to continue, holding his knees tightly to his chest.

"I ran away, and I found this small little village, just a couple of hours from here. I was stealing food, sleeping in people's barns," George chuckled when Tommy's eyes widened, "Yeah, I'm not kidding. It was disgusting."

He rubbed a hand through his hair. He didn't miss the cold nights on the dirty hay, having to rush

out before sunrise so the farmers wouldn't find him. All he ever dreamed of was having a home, but after everything that had happened in his life, he wasn't sure that it was meant for him.

"But one day, I stole from this little bakery, but I was cocky -- I got caught," He cleared his throat, noting that Tommy had already calmed down significantly, his sniffles less frequent and his eyes drying, "It was Sapnap that showed up to distract the police, afterwards introducing me to Callahan, Alyssa, Sam, Bad and the others." *And Dream*. But neither of them were in a good enough headspace to think about *him*.

"I haven't seen Alyssa and Callahan in forever," Tommy mumbled, clearing his throat after it broke. George didn't tease him about it like he would've before. "Where are they now?"

"They live quite far from here, neither of them are fans of war."

Tommy hummed. George liked to think that no one was a *fan* of war, no one sought after it, they were all casualties of battles, filled with trauma and pent up anger. The only person who seemed to enjoy it was Dream. It made sense that he was the cause.

Still, a part of George wanted to give him the benefit of the doubt. He wanted to see it from his side, maybe he could understand. But then the tower that Tommy had been reduced to came back into mind, and all understanding went out the window.

"After I joined their little group, we came here, built the community house and tried to make the home none of us had ever had."

"And was it? The home you never had?"

He remembered the day Sam left, his eyes flicking to his doorway as the guilt ebbed in his chest. Slamming doors and ultimatums. He almost let Dream ruin that friendship too, just like the bond with Quackity that had been nipped in the bud before it could sprout into the friendship it was supposed to be.

With every memory, and every realization, he grew more and more angry. He wanted to defend Dream, he really did, but he found it harder and harder with every moment.

"It wasn't meant to be," He said simply, smiling fondly as he scanned the house he was currently in, cuddled up on the couch with someone who he promised to protect, "But I have hope yet."

Tommy's eyebrows pinched, "Who knew you were such a sap, Gogy."

A comfortable silence fell between them, before long a yawn breaking through the confines of Tommy's throat, but before George could ask if he wanted to go to bed, his head fell onto his shoulder.

Maybe he just didn't want to be alone, George was okay with that. He could protect him better this way anyways, able to keep watch as he slept, and give him something to do while he fought off his own fatigue.

George threaded his fingers through Tommy's hair, stifling a yawn of his own. It couldn't hurt to close his eyes, just for a minute.

When he woke up the next morning, Tommy curled into his side, breathing softly, a blanket strewn over them and Sam sitting at the counter drinking coffee, he didn't mention it.

But between Tommy mumbling under his breath, the smell of bacon wafting from the kitchen, and

the fact that he *woke up* , he couldn't help but smile.

"You're such a mother hen -- I'm fine!"

George huffed, crossing his arms over his chest, glaring even harder when Sam laughed. Tommy had insisted on helping cook, but ended up burning himself in the process, leading to their current predicament, George forcing a cold rag on his arm as he tried to get away.

"You need to keep it cool or it's going to hurt," George chastised, once again raising the damp cloth to his inflamed skin. Tommy pulled away, again.

"Yeah... if I was a bitch," Sam laughed harder, George swatted the rag over the back of his head, "But I'm a big man, George!"

"Fine," George resigned, sitting at his spot at the table, sipping his apple juice in a way that *screamed* passive aggressive, "Don't cry to me when it starts to hurt."

"Never," Tommy rebutted, clenching his jaw. George fought the urge to smirk, instead, offering the rag. Tommy shook his head, muttering, "Pog through the pain."

Sam chuckled, reaching towards George to grab the salt and pepper, then sprinkling them on his eggs, "So, whaddya wanna do today?" He asked between chewing, smiling when George groaned and smacked him.

"Don't we have to hide in here?" Tommy asked, caving and reaching towards where George put the rag, cursing him out under his breath as he put the wet cloth on his skin.

George smiled, mostly glad that Tommy was okay and taking care of himself, but also feeling ever so slightly vindicated.

"You both should stay in here, at least for now, but that doesn't mean we have to be bored all day."

"We don't have to do anything, Sam," George interrupted, "You've already done enough, you don't need to babysit us."

Sam tilted his head, rolling his eyes, "What part of 'I want you to feel at home' did you not understand? If you think I'm going to leave you guys when I can help it, you're dumb."

George wanted to be cheeky and continue with his stubbornness, but an idea struck him.

"Do you still have the archery equipment?"

Tommy perked up, looking between Sam and George with pinched eyebrows and a slight frown, only increasing when Sam smirked. "Archery equipment?"

"Yeah, for George to practice with," Sam explained, laying his fork over his plate and taking a sip of water, "He's the best archer on the SMP, didn't you know?"

"Well I wouldn't say the bes--"

"WHAT?!"

Both Sam and George flinched when Tommy interrupted them, George's cheeks pink from the praise.

Sam nodded vigorously, his lips pulled into a large grin, obviously excited, “Yeah, he can outshoot anyone! It just tends to get overshadowed by his... louder... friends.” He took another sip of water, mumbling an apology when George shot him a glare.

“It's fine,” George shrugged, “I don't need the validation to know I'm the best.”

“I didn't know you were good at archery, George,” Tommy admitted, growing sheepish as he stabbed the small crumbs of food on his plate, “Wilbur always said you were the glorified trophy wife of the Dream Team.”

George’s mouth dropped open, and Sam doubled over in laughter.

“Trophy wife?!” He exclaimed, making a mental note to re-kill ghostbur when he saw him, “I did basically everything!”

“I thought you were okay with ‘no validation’, George.” Sam quipped, breathless from his heavy laughter.

George huffed, crossing his arms over his chest as he, well, pouted. It was true, he never relied on validation or other’s approval, but he at least wanted credit where it was due.

He pushed past the pettiness and let himself feel excited about getting back into archery, he would surely need to hone in his skills after being out of the game for a month.

The duel once again plagued his conscious, Tommy versus Dream with only a bow and one arrow. Teaching him how to defend himself better wouldn't hurt either.

“Whatever, let's just clean up so we can go.”

Sam nodded, smiling brightly as he admitted he had made some changes to their archery room, and that he couldn't wait for them to see.

Chapter End Notes

go drink some water legends, ily

also if anyone ever thinks of a prompt or idea for this au, feel free to leave it in the comments or write it :)

i might do some one shots for this as more ideas come to me,, i'm a slut for that family dynamic 🍷

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

i wrote this purely out of desire to see this dynamic, i wasn't expecting it to get much support haha

now i'm worried it won't live up to people's expectations oop

anyways more inconsistent chapter lengths ☹️

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

George was left speechless when Sam showed him what he meant, long gone the small room with a single worn target and bad lighting, a large, long corridor with multi-colored targets and a variety of bows and arrows decorating the walls taking its place.

“Holy shit, Sam” Tommy muttered, eyeing the room with awe. George was glad the teenager was just as excited as he was.

Sam rubbed a hand over the back of his neck, always humble about his builds and how much work he put into his projects, it was something George had always admired about him. “Yeah, I- Uh, I built this in case you ever wanted to move back, George. Figured you'd like a nice place to practice.”

George's felt warm, blood rushed to his cheeks and his heart beat quicker. Just when he was getting used to how thoughtful Sam was, he always had something new to surprise him with.

“Well, uh,” He stuttered, eyes gleaming as he noticed his bow was still there, his favorite one from before he moved, he turned back to him, making eye contact, “Thank you, Sam.”

Sam opened his mouth, fondness on his face that turned into surprise when Tommy yelled, “Guys! Stop being so slow and let's fuck some shit up!”

George spent the next couple of hours teaching Sam and Tommy the correct form, how to improve aim, and where to look, among other things, showing off just *slightly* along the way.

Tommy was a naturally skilled fighter, with tons of potential. The only thing he lacked was a good, patient teacher. George wanted to be that. He wanted to fill the guardian role, teach him all that he could and protect him from the world. That feeling terrified him.

He was grateful for Sam, grateful that he had someone he knew he could trust and that he wasn't alone. Sam had always gravitated towards the role of a protector, and he knew that he would help Tommy, too.

“Georgeeee,” Tommy whined, plopping down next to him on the couch and laying his head on George’s thigh, hands rubbing his temples.

At first he tried shoving him away, but Tommy remained planted in place. After a moment, with a roll of his eyes, he let it be, “What do you want, Tomothy?”

Tommy paid no attention to his question, just groaning and shutting his eyes, “My head hurts.”

“What am I supposed to do about that?” George snipped, but he couldn't help the gentle adoration that pooled in his chest. Tommy trusted him, and he came to him for help.

The closest thing to family George had ever had was the Dream Team, he had always thought that was it, that he would never get anything else. But this... this whole situation had George reconsidering that; more and more with each passing moment. It made him feel warm.

That warmth only doubled when Tommy mumbled, “fix it, please?”

George mumbled under his breath, asking how the *hell* he was supposed to fix a headache, but he spurred into action anyways.

George sighed, bringing a hand to the blonde’s head, gently stroking his forehead and temples. Tommy practically purred at the action, nuzzling into George’s hand. He continued massaging Tommy’s head, going back between gently padding his scalp and running his fingers through his hair.

“How much water have you had today?” George asked softly, not trying to hurt the teen anymore, “You might be dehydrated.”

Tommy only whined, shaking his head softly.

“Tommy,” George reprimanded, “Go drink some water.”

“In a minute...” He mumbled, voice barely above the volume of a whisper, “M’Comfy.”

George huffed, readjusting so he was situated better on the couch, fingers still massaging Tommy's head as the blonde soon fell asleep, curling around him like a cat.

That's when Sam walked in, looking at the two with an unreadable glint in his eyes and a small smile on his lips, he motioned to Tommy, “He still tired?” He asked softly.

George nodded, “His head hurts.” Sam frowned, immediately coming to George's other side, leaning into him without thinking and scanning Tommy, like he expected there to be something physical on his head to make it hurt.

“He probably needs water,” Sam whispered, eyes wide, the way his head tilted reminded George of a golden retriever, “Has he had any water?”

“That's what I thought...” He smiled, turning towards Sam. Their faces were close. only centimeters apart, George’s eyes flicked to Sam's lips involuntarily, his breath hitching when Sam mimicked his actions, then met his eyes.

“I really am glad you're here, George,” He whispered, almost an octave lower, it sent chills down his spine and heat pool in his stomach. “I want you both to be happy here.”

A comfortable moment of silence fell between them, George tilted back to Tommy, weirdly content

with his life at that moment. His own eyelids grew heavy, and he found himself leaning further into Sam. But the second he started feeling the warm grasp of sleep take him, he jolted back awake, almost waking up the sleeping boy on his lap.

Sam looked at him with furrowed brows, but he shrugged him off, "It's nothing." He mumbled, "Don't worry about it."

"Can I ask you something?" Sam carefully put a hand on one of George's, which was still massaging Tommy's scalp. His hand was a lot bigger than his, he wasn't sure why that made him feel so good.

"I live far away, but I still hear all the gossip..." George tensed. He knew where this was going. "No one heard from you in a month -- where were you?"

George winced, hand stilling and closing his eyes, like if he ignored it it would go away. He didn't want to explain how he was a pushover, letting Dream get away with controlling him over and over, just like the day Sam had left. He didn't want him to think any less of him.

"A couple hours from L'Manburg." He said simply, relishing in the fact that *technically*, it wasn't a lie. He was a couple hours from L'Manburg, just hidden in a small hut, put in a coma like a glorified sleeping beauty.

Sam sighed, clearly not satisfied with his answer, his thumb rubbing circles on George's wrist, "I'm not going to pressure you, I trust you'll tell me when you're ready."

Tommy stirred, mumbling something under his breath, eyebrows pinched. They shared a look.

"I think he's having a nightmare."

Frowning, George took in the sleeping boy's face, a deep frown dragging his lips and eyes twitching under his eyelids, it scared him more than he liked to admit. How was he supposed to protect Tommy from his dreams?

"What do we do?"

Soft whimpers escaped the blonde's throat, each one sending George's heart skyrocketing. Sharing a look with Sam, he could tell he felt the same way.

"Tommy," George whispered, gently shaking the boy, the blonde's breath was shaky, George put his hand on his shoulder, "Tommy, hey, wake up."

The whimpers finally stopped, Tommy's eyes slowly peeling open, flinching both from the light and from George and Sam staring down at him.

"Uh... hi, what's up?"

George snorted, relief filling his chest as he knew Tommy wasn't in any pain, even in a dream. "You were having a nightmare, Toms."

Tommy's face fell, George could tell that he was trying to put his walls back up, hide his vulnerability. Sam leaned forward, rubbing his hand through blonde hair, "How's your headache, bud?"

"That reminds me," George interrupted, mostly thinking about Tommy taking care of himself, but a small part also offering him an out, a change in topic or a chance to get some air, "Tommy, go get

some water.”

The blonde huffed, mumbling, “Don't tell me what to do, bitch.” But he stood up anyways and headed towards the kitchen.

When Tommy wasn't latched onto him like a little leech, George became astutely aware of how he was basically on Sam's lap, so close he could smell his natural musk and cologne.

His cheeks grew bright red, embarrassment making the blood rush from his chest, to the nape of his neck, then up to his face; he scooted further away, not noticing how Sam's face fell.

Chapter End Notes

short chapter but more to come

if i get a second tonight i'll update again :)

ty for all the comments & kudos i appreciate it <3

ily

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

2 updates in one day, mom are u finally proud of me

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

A week had passed since then, and George was making his way back to the archery room, as Tommy all but begged him for more lessons.

He didn't mind though, he liked teaching, it was fun when he had someone so excited to learn.

Sam was out, spitefully gathering supplies for the house, complaining about leaving the entire time he got ready. It made George smile, thinking about how happy Sam had been lately, he really was a golden retriever, thriving when he had people to protect and give him attention.

George had to admit, he was pretty happy too. He wanted to believe that Tommy and Sam were his family, but he was afraid that if he said it, he would jinx it and it would all come crashing down.

He had quickly adapted to filling the role as Tommy's guardian, Sam happy to help in any way George couldn't. It felt nice, having someone supporting him. He was still afraid, so terribly afraid, but it was getting a little bit easier to breathe.

Sleeping was the one thing that didn't get easier, every night George walked into his bedroom, determined to fall asleep, only to end up on the couch, usually with Tommy, terrified that the next time he'd fall asleep he wouldn't wake up, or worse of all, that he'd wake up and all of this would be a dream.

Eventually he just came straight to Tommy's room, his anxiety forcing him to make sure he was safe. He held him until the blonde's soft breathing filled the room and till he eventually, literally, passed out.

George shivered as he slowly made his way through the house, cursing the lack of wood by the fireplace. That was one of the downsides of living in the side of the mountain, it was always cold. Sam and Tommy never seemed to mind, but George always felt like he was seconds away from freezing to death. He'd have to ask Sam to get some more wood when he got back.

The soft grey color of a hoodie caught his eye, it being one of Sam's left on the back of a chair. He didn't want to be a nuisance and steal his clothes, but it was cold, there was no more wood, and it wasn't exactly like he had a ton of his own clothes laying around that he could bundle up in.

He slipped the hoodie over his head without a second thought, the fabric drowning his smaller

body, cuffs falling just past his fingertips and the hem reaching his mid-thigh.

It smelt just like Sam, his cologne, his shampoo. He wondered when that smell became so... nice. And comforting. It smelt like home, like his daydreams of stability and safety, if he took another deep inhale before heading to Tommy, that was his little secret.

Tommy burst out laughing when he saw what George was wearing, Fran wagging her tail by his side, "Jesus, Gogs, you're fuckin short." He quipped. George rolled his eyes. "Is that what took you so long? You were stealing Sam's hoodie?"

"Shut up," George shot back, cheeks flushing from the embarrassment. He walked to the wall lined with bows, grabbing the same one he always used, "Are you ready to start?"

"I've been ready," Tommy retorted, grabbing his own bow, "Had I known you were simping over Sam I would have started without you."

George glared at the tall blonde, his cheeks growing hotter and his chest tighter, "I wasn't simping over Sam." He mumbled, making Tommy laugh, "Now stop trying to put off being destroyed in archery."

"Pfft, big man, I'm going to be better than you in no time, I'm kind of a legend didn't you know?"

George scoffed, shaking his head with fondness, grabbing some arrows for him and Tommy, "You are, Tommy -- You'll be a pro in no time." He said genuinely, smirking when Tommy's pseudo-arrogance faltered for a moment, before he made a face.

"Augh, you're so gross and sappy, George," He deflected, "What happened to you?"

George smiled wider, biting his tongue from responding with 'you', he pointed towards Tommy's bow, putting his attention back on the lesson, "Anyways, can you remember the name of your style of bow?"

Tommy thought for a minute, twisting it in his hand and getting used to the weight, "Uhh, recurve?"

"Yes, perfect," George affirmed, he felt pride swirling in his chest as he watched Tommy, who was smiling with slowly-growing self confidence. He wanted to teach him all that he knew, so that he could always be sure of himself and believe that he was able to take on the world. "Recurves are typically used for beginners, since they only have the essentials," He pointed out the different parts of the bow, "The string, an arrow rest, limbs and a riser."

Tommy nodded. George explained the basics their first time, but he wanted to implement it deep inside his brain, so that it came as natural to the teen as breathing.

"There's other bows, like longbows, crossbows and compound, but for now we'll stick with this."

"How did you get into archery anyways?" Tommy asked, taking an arrow from George and notching one, waiting for further instruction.

George drew his own bow, waiting for Tommy to take in his stance and recreate it, "I never liked swords, but I needed a way to get food and protect myself -- archery just came natural to me." He focused on the target from the sight of his bow, string against his cheek, before releasing, the arrow sinking in the dead center of the bullseye.

"Why do you have the string so close to your face? Aren't you worried about it hitting you?"

He shook his head, smiling as he remembered that was one of his fears when he was starting out, “It won't hit you, trust me, it helps with accuracy.”

Tommy huffed, biting his lip as he raised the bow and pulled back, his breathing quick and his posture tense.

“Relax, Toms,” George assured, coming to his side and checking his stance, “Get out of your head, focus on the target. When you're ready, release, and remember to follow through.”

The blonde took a deep breath, before releasing the string, the arrow flying forward and missing the bullseye by merely an inch. However, that inch didn't stop Tommy from jumping up and down in excitement.

“George! Look! Do you see that!” He cheered, facing George like he was searching for his approval, his validation.

George returned his smile, pride flowing through him with far greater force than before. He stepped forward, tentatively hugging Tommy, who stilled in his arms for a moment, before returning the affection.

“You did great, Tommy,” He whispered earnestly, pulling back and looking into blue eyes, “I knew you were a natural, with a little more practice and I have no doubt that you'll be better than me.”

He patted his back before pulling away completely, leaving the blonde reeling from the genuine praise. George wondered if anyone had ever complimented him before.

He grabbed another arrow, holding it out for him.

“Now do it again.”

George didn't know how long they stayed there, but the next thing he knew the large door to the cave was grumbling open, and it became painfully aware to him that he was still in Sam's hoodie.

Before he could even think about taking it off, the door to the archery room opened and Sam stepped inside, freezing in his tracks when he noticed what George was wearing. George didn't need to look at Tommy to know he was smirking.

“Uh, hi.” George greeted lamely, his cheeks growing red as he met eye contact with Sam, his mouth agape and pupils wide, like a deer caught in headlights, “Um -- we ran out of, out of wood... and I was cold.”

Sam nodded slowly, before clearing his throat and leaning against the wall, “It's okay, George, it looks good on you.”

He didn't think it was possible to blush harder, but after he said that George felt like he could melt into the floor, both with embarrassment and... something else that he couldn't quite place.

Luckily Tommy was the one to change the subject, bouncing towards Sam and pulling him to the end of the range and towards the targets, “Look Sam, I hit the bullseye! Multiple times!”

“No way Tommy!” Sam cheered, the hoodie forgotten and excitement filling his mind, he turned, sharing a smile with George before looking back to the teen, “I had a feeling you'd pick it up quick.”

George made his way down to the targets, finally able to retrieve the arrows after Tommy made him keep them there till Sam could see.

“Where did you go today, big man?” Tommy asked. It was something that George noticed he did a lot, he always seemed to be searching for praise, but then as soon as he got it, he deflected.

“Well, bud, I stocked up on meat, got some fruits and vegetables, and I uh... got some card games, thought we could use something new to do around here.”

Tommy's attention piqued at the mention of cards, his fingers twitching by his sides and he chewed his lips, “Cards?”

Sam nodded, eyebrows pinched, “Yeah, why?”

“Nothing,” He mumbled, looking towards the ground for a moment before carefully meeting eye contact with Sam, who was removing his creeper mask, “Can we play speed? I used to play with Wilbur and it was my favorite.”

Sam met George's gaze, the atmosphere in the room changing at the mention of Wilbur. The only way George knew him was through war, and it just then occurred to him that between the TNT, between the battles, Wilbur was still human. He played games with his brother, and sang and played guitar. He wondered if Tommy had mourned his death yet, or if that was another thing he was keeping inside.

“Why don't you and George play a game first,” Sam finally answered, patting Tommy's shoulder before smirking, winking at George, “Apparently I need to go chop some more wood.”

Tommy burst out laughing, the tense atmosphere evaporating as the embarrassment flooded back into George's chest.

“Shut up.”

“We're friends right?”

George frowned, looking up from his hand of cards to look at Tommy, who was focused intently on his own cards and chewing his lips, a frown etched onto his face.

“What're you talking about, Tommy? Of course we're friends.” He set down his cards, their game of go fish long forgotten, “What made you ask that?”

Tommy exhaled sharply, setting down his own cards and putting his head in his hands, “I just, I thought Dream was my friend,” George winced, hot white anger building in his gut, “He told me so, but he kept doing things that hurt me...”

George swallowed down his questions, needing to make sure Tommy felt comfortable first. “It's okay, take your time.”

The blonde sighed, rubbing his temples as he took a second to find the words, “It was so confusing -- I'm still confused. He would tell me he was there for me, but then he would leave. I know now that he was just there to watch me, but-”

He raised his head, glassy blue eyes meeting George's, “Are you going to leave me, too?”

George's heart shattered as the words left Tommy's mouth. As far as he was concerned, Dream was

dead to him.

“Tommy, listen to me,” He made his voice as steady and as confident as possible, not wanting to give one reason for the boy not to believe him, “We're family now, I'm never leaving you. Dream will never come near you again.”

Tommy sniffled, wiping a stray tear that had fallen down his cheek, nodding slightly.

“Why don't we go see if Sam needs help with wood,” George stood up, the cards long forgotten, “The fresh air and sunshine would be nice too.”

“Aren't we not supposed to go outside?” Tommy's voice wavered, but he stood up regardless. George fought the urge to hug him and hide him away until the end of time, all he wanted was to keep him safe.

George led them to the door, pressing random buttons till he found the right one, “Everyone needs a little fresh air once in a while, don't you think?”

Sam stood a little bit in front of the door, watching intently as it opened and they stepped through, an unreadable expression on his face.

“What are you doing?” He asked, coming forward, frowning, holding an axe to his side.

That's when George noticed, he was shirtless; the breath left his lungs. A thin sheen of sweat covered his muscles, showing off his defined abs and shoulders as he walked closer, his biceps flexing as he held the axe.

“I- uh, what?” George stuttered, his face getting warmer and the same heat pooling in his stomach.

Tommy snorted, stepping forward and taking the lead, giving George a much needed second to catch his breath, “We needed air, big man.”

Sam sighed, running his hand through his hair, George's eyes trailed the action intently. “As much as I don't want to risk you guys being seen, it probably would be good for you both to get some sun, you've been cooped up for a while.”

“Do you need help?” George asked, finally finding his words, his eyes meeting Sam's. Though when Sam looked at him like that, filled with adoration and genuine fondness, his thoughts stopped flowing once again.

Sam's mouth opened to answer, but Tommy shot forward and interrupted him, “Oooh, can I use the axe big man?” He asked, already reaching out. Sam hesitantly handed it to him, sharing a look with George.

“Please be careful, Tommy.” He reminded, fully knowing the teen was capable of handling himself, he had seen it before. But as he grew closer to the blonde, he found himself growing far more worried over the little things. He could already hear Tommy's snarky, ‘okay mom’.

Tommy waved him off, practically running to the trunk where Sam was chopping wood, said man trailing close behind.

George snorted, a slight smile pulling his lips as he watched the scene unfold, Sam very obviously worried, helicoptering over the eager blonde and handing him wood.

However, chopping wood wasn't his forte, so he walked to where Fran was laying in the sun,

golden beams illuminating her fur, and he laid by her side.

Chapter End Notes

i really like this dynamic ngl, again if anyone wants to leave ideas for maybe future chapters? maybe a series of one-shots following this,, feel free to comment or send a message to my tumblr or twitter

tumblr is @slushiesforcar

twitter is @saquashing

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

hey hi hello

the number of chapters may increase depending on editing and rewriting a couple things so be prepared for that

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Tommy watched carefully as George walked away, his stomach twisting as his nerves buzzed, making his hands feel shaky. He took a deep breath as he reminded himself that Sam wouldn't hurt him, he knew he wouldn't. Wait, did he know that?

His fingers tightened on the handle of the axe.

George wouldn't have left him with Sam if he thought he would hurt him. They wouldn't have gone to him if he didn't trust him. He trusted George, as weird as that was, and he trusted his judgement.

Now was the perfect time to do what he had been wanting to do for days, though, so he swallowed down his anxiety, and forced the voice from the back of his head.

Sam placed a smaller log on the larger one, and directed Tommy where to hit. He huffed, did he look like a damn fool? Of course he knew how to chop wood, he lived in a cold, wet ravine for fucks sakes.

Still, he did what he was told, and he chopped the wood. Why did their validation feel so good? He was an independent man, he didn't need no one, exile proved that. Tommy shivered involuntarily, the smell of gunpowder plaguing his nose. He scanned the area quickly, looking to George first, making sure there were no creepers nearby.

Sam wore a creeper mask. He wondered if he was a hybrid, like Fundy or Antfrost. That would be cool. He would ask him about it later, but he had more important things to worry about.

"We need to have a chat, big man."

Sam raised an eyebrow, stepping across from Tommy so they were facing each other, "Is everything okay, bud?"

Tommy scowled, how did Sam make him feel so... calm? It must be mind tricks, or maybe mind control. Mind something.

"You and George." He said simply, swinging his axe into another log in an attempt at intimidation, but pouting when the wood just bounced off, a minor chip in the side. "You two are always staring

at each other and shit. Don't think I haven't noticed you lookin' at him with heart eyes."

Sighing, Sam ran a hand through his hair, the strands falling out of place. He looked to the ground, seeming almost solemn, "I know..." He confessed, Tommy was almost surprised at how easy it was to get him to confess, maybe he had mind powers too. "But he has a lot going on, and I know his heart still belongs to someone else." Tommy's lip curled at the implication. "If all I can have him as is a friend, I'm okay with that."

A silence fell between them, neither of them quite sure what to say. Tommy felt bad for Sam, he clearly cared more for George than Dream ever did, and yet he was still sitting on the sidelines.

Tommy chewed his lip, swallowing his displeasure at the idea of George with Sam, overpowering his desire to protect him. He wanted to keep him safe, pay him back for protecting him, as annoying as it was, but maybe this was the way to do so.

Besides, as sure as Sam was that George still loved Dream, he wasn't.

"You're twice the man Dream ever was," Tommy replied earnestly, his serious tone making Sam's eyes widen, "And I wouldn't be so sure that George doesn't love you and shit -- You should have seen how hard he blushed when I teased him about wearing your hoodie, it was ridiculous, he was like a tomato."

Sam's lips curved into a small smile, his tense muscles relaxing ever so slightly and his cheeks dusting with pink. Tommy fought the urge to gag.

"Give him time." He continued, ignoring the anxiety pooling in his stomach. If George and Sam got together, would they still want him around? Was he going to be alone again? He set down the axe, raising his hand to bite his nails.

He hadn't let himself think about anything that had happened in exile, the TNT or the tower. He didn't want to die, he just couldn't stand to be alone anymore. Honestly, he wasn't sure if he could survive going back to that.

But that was selfish, just like Dream had called him. He shouldn't be making decisions based off of himself, George rescued him, the least he could do was help him with his gross relationship problems.

His thoughts immediately faded away when Sam suddenly wrapped him in a hug. Tommy's breath stuttering and his lip quivering just slightly. He didn't know why, he was a big man, he was fine.

Sam rubbed his shoulder, he hiccuped as he fought himself from crying. God, why was he crying? He was fine. He didn't need anyone.

"You're a good kid, Tommy."

That was the final straw, and Tommy broke down into Sam's arms. His legs felt weak beneath him, and he was grateful for Sam for keeping him upright.

It was like the floodgates opened, once he started crying, he couldn't stop, no matter how hard he tried. All of his attempts at apologizing and talking melted into hiccups and sobs. Sam didn't seem to mind, whispering affirmations into his ear and rubbing his back.

Tommy trembled in his arms, shaking and heaving, flashes of Wilbur, of Dream, of exile, TNT and wooden towers overlooking craters.

Soon another set of hands touched his side, arms wrapping around him. He flinched for a moment, before his eyes shot open and he saw George, face kind, and brown eyes glassy.

The three ended up on the ground, Tommy latched onto George and crying into his chest, legs draped over Sam, who was rubbing circles into his knee.

"I-I'm sorry-" He hiccuped, head pounding and his lungs burning.

George shushed him, rubbing his arm. "Don't apologize, Tommy," He soothed, "Crying is healthy, just let it out."

"Yeah, bud, don't worry about it," Sam added, "Only big men cry."

Tommy snorted, his breath slowly evening as his panic faded. He noticed George leaning into Sam's chest, and he held on tighter.

I'm never leaving you.

He took a deep breath. George was his family now, he even said so. He wasn't going to leave him, even if he ended up dating Sam. All he could do was trust him, despite his fears.

George stared down at the sleeping blonde laying on him, his hands threading through his hair. He was worried, as soon as he noticed he was crying he leapt from his spot next to Fran and ran to him, needing to help.

Sam had a handle on it, he knew, but his worry overpowered that. He needed to be there himself. It was like when he had pets, that same need to care for them, just a thousand times stronger.

"We should move inside." Sam whispered, his breath tickling George's ear. That's when he realized just how close they were, he was practically on Sam's lap, his back against his chest and head against his shoulder.

Nodding, he moved away from him, gentle fingers padding through Tommy's hair and fondness filling his chest. For both of the blondes, just in different ways. He didn't think too hard about that, focused on getting the teenager inside.

"Here -- I got him." Sam said, kneeling down and hooking his arms under his knees and back, "I don't wanna wake him up, he needs the rest."

George followed him inside, tucking him into the bedding in his room, Fran jumping up and laying by his feet, and making sure he had a glass of water waiting for him, before meeting Sam back in the living room.

He sat on the couch, head in his hands as he tried to process all of his thoughts and emotions. He felt the cushion shift as Sam sat down next to him, wrapping his arm around his shoulders. George didn't pull away.

"I don't know what to do." George whispered, his emotions clouding his usual self-restraint. He wiped a stray tear, barely registering that his eyes were tearing up. "I don't know how to help."

Sam pulled him closer, rubbing his side. George let himself relax in his hold, his head burrowing in his chest. He smelt good, George noted, temporarily distracted by his natural musk mixed with cologne.

Why did it calm him so much?

“You need to give yourself some credit, George,” Sam kissed the top of his head, his heart thundered in his chest, he wouldn't be surprised if Sam could hear it, “You're helping plenty by just being there for him.”

“Dream hurt him, Sammy,” George mumbled, the old nickname falling off of his tongue without a second thought. Sam tensed slightly at the name, so George continued, hoping they could ignore it, “Dream hurt a lot of people, and somehow -- for some reason I ignored it, I just didn't see it.”

George raised his eyes to meet Sam's, the way he met his gaze made him feel vulnerable, like his entire soul was on display, but he kept the contact.

“Dream hurt *you*, and I just let it happen.”

Sam's breath hitched, and his hand stilled on George's side, “Why is it you think I left the SMP, George?”

He shut his eyes, his jaw clenching. He hated remembering the day he left, hated how silent the community house was after, how Callahan and Alyssa stopped coming around as much.

He swallowed thickly, before opening his eyes again, “You and Dream were fighting, I don't remember what started it, but it got worse after we started hanging out more,” He mumbled, tears filling his eyes as his fingers traced unintelligible shapes onto Sam's arm, “But I remember yelling, and at the end, Dream told me I could leave with you or stay with him and Sapnap.”

Sam sighed, his fingers picking up again. George inhaled deeply, licking his lips as he continued, “I was frozen, I didn't know what to do -- The next thing I knew you were slamming the door behind you and I didn't see you again for almost a year. Where did you go?”

“I just needed space.” Sam replied, George wondered if he was keeping vague on purpose. He hoped he didn't make him mad by how little he remembered, but he had a bad habit of zoning out whenever someone started yelling. He felt lips on his forehead, and it helped soothe some of his worries.

“There was nothing you could have done either,” Sam continued, “I know Dream is your friend, and I don't want to put him down in front of you, but he's not a good person.”

Flashes of the bed, of the ageing picture in the frame, left decaying like his respect for Dream, entered his mind, only topped by the crater, by the sight of Tommy headed to the tower, with that resignation in his blue eyes.

He nodded, urging Sam to continue.

“He's always been possessive over you, and I was willing to overlook that, as long as you were happy, but then it changed.”

“What changed?”

“He got mad at me for talking to you, for taking your attention away from him. That's what started the fight. He called you ‘his’ and I just... I just couldn't handle it.”

George felt conflicted. He was furious with Dream, for driving Sam out because of his jealousy and for objectifying him. But also warm, flustered from Sam standing up for him, for wanting what was best for him.

It felt like the difference between infatuation and love. Possessiveness and respect. The difference between the two were night and day, and he couldn't believe he hadn't seen it before.

George raised his head, glassy brown eyes looking into green, before tilting, placing a gentle kiss to Sam's cheek, his stubble pricking his lips.

“Thank you, for everything.”

George shot up when Tommy walked into the room, pulling him into a hug, his arms tight around his chest.

“Uh -- hi?” Tommy sputtered, wrapping his own arms around him and looking to Sam, who was only smiling. “What's wrong?”

“Nothing's wrong,” George assured, pulling away and shoving the constant image of the tower from the back of his mind, “I'm just glad you're here.”

Sam stood up, ruffling Tommy's hair and moving to the kitchen.

“Who wants to play a card game?”

“You're such a cheater, this isn't fair!”

Tommy and Sam shared a laugh, George huffed, crossing his arms over his chest.

“Stop whining and give me your sevens, Gogy.” Tommy held out his hand, smirking as George rolled his eyes and slammed three cards on the table.

“How do you always know what cards I have?!” George pouted, biting his lip as he stared down at the two remaining cards in his hands, a three and an eight, “Sam your turn.”

“Hmm,” He took a sip of water, before he faced Tommy, “Tommy, do you have any three's?”

George felt his face burn as he tried to keep his expression neutral. He had never had a good poker face.

“Go fish, big man.”

Sam sighed, and he took a card from the pile.

George was practically vibrating, waiting impatiently for Sam to put the card in his hand before speaking, “Sam, do you have any threes?”

He couldn't contain his grin as Sam groaned, thumbing two cards out of his hand and giving them to George, who was giggling at his misfortune. He only needed one more.

“Is there anything specific you two want for snacks?” Sam asked, waiting for Tommy to inspect his hand and decide on who to ask, “I have to go into the SMP tomorrow and can pick them up.”

Tommy raised a finger, telling him to wait as he asked for aces, huffing when he was told to fish.

“Could you stop by Niki's bakery? I've been craving her pastries since exile.”

Sam nodded, asking George for an eight, laughing when he glared and begrudgingly handed him what he had.

"Of course I can, bud," Sam took another sip of water, "Is there anything specific you're wanting?"

"Ooh, chocolate croissants!" Tommy exclaimed, adjusting how he was sitting, licking his lips as he thought about the pastries.

George nodded, mouth watering as he remembered the last time he had some of Niki's pastries, he felt a little guilty, he wondered if he should have told her he found Tommy, or where they were. As far as she knew he just disappeared again.

He shook those thoughts away, focusing on what was most important, the people in front of him. He couldn't change anything now.

"Sam, do you have any threes?"

Sam smirked, "You already took my threes, George."

"Oh, right -- sorry." He said, picking up a card as his cheeks flushed. "Tommy your turn."

Tommy burst out laughing, and George's stomach dropped.

"No, no way--"

Tommy doubled over, his eyes watering and his hands slamming the table. When he eventually caught his breath, he spoke.

"George, do you have any threes?"

George brought his hand to his mouth, stifling a yawn as they sat around the fireplace, Tommy laying on the floor with Fran, her tail wagging as he pet her.

"Do you wanna go to bed?"

George shook his head, facing Sam and answering earnestly, "That's the last thing I want."

A moment of comfortable silence fell between them, the only sound being the crackling of the fire. But eventually, Sam stood up, stretching his arms and back.

"Come on," He said, gathering both of their attention, "I have something else to show you, I think y'all will like it."

The two shared a look, before following Sam out of the house, George swiping another one of his hoodies before the chill night air could reach him, muttering a 'shut up' when both Tommy and Sam smirked.

"Where are we going big man?" Tommy asked, looking around the dark field with trepidation, the moon being their only source of light. Sam didn't answer, leading them away from the house and into an elevator, the platform lifting the group to the top of a mountain.

George didn't have the time to marvel over his redstone, or how he had never noticed the elevator before, before the doors opened and he was once again left stunned by Sam's surprises. It felt like there was always something new to completely shock him. He found that the mysteriousness was thrilling, rather than intimidating, as Dream's had been.

On top of the mountain was a building, made of andesite and glass, a dome on top with a large telescope. He vaguely remembered one time that Sam told him about his fascination with the stars,

the planets, and the constellations. A kaleidoscope of butterflies erupted from his stomach, buzzing through his chest and sending bolts of lightning through his spine.

So many things change. It's a part of life. His relationship with Dream had changed, his house changed, *he* changed. But looking at Sam, who was staring at him with the same respect and admiration as he always had, excited about the stars, he was glad some things stayed the same.

"Do you see the W in the stars?" Sam pointed out, both Tommy and George squinted as they looked up at the night sky, George huffing as he mumbled something about all the stars looking the same. "It's made of five stars, look -- right there!"

Tommy nodded, smiling as he finally noticed the constellation. George rolled his eyes, raising his eyebrows at Sam, like he expected him to be able to highlight the stars. But Sam had a better idea.

He came behind George, wrapping one arm around his stomach and putting his head right next to his own, George sighed when he felt Sam's hot breath tickling his neck, back warm against his large chest. Sam raised his other hand, pointing to one of the brighter stars in the sky.

"This one is Caph," He whispered, the low timbre of his voice making heat pool in the bottom of George's stomach. He tried to focus on the stars, but found the only thing that was in his mind was how good it felt to be in Sam's arms, almost caged in. He should have felt claustrophobic, but he just felt safe. Sam continued, not noticing how George's breath stuttered whenever he spoke, "This one is Shedir--"

"Why do they have such weird names?" Tommy asked, oblivious to George's existential crisis, looking into the sky with a big telescope. Sam chuckled, George bit his lip to keep from whining at the sound.

"There's a lot of reasons," Sam explained, thumb rubbing George's side as he explained. He wondered if he even knew he was doing it, "Needing unique names to keep track of them, basing a lot of them off of the Greek alphabet, you get the idea."

Tommy hummed, focusing back on the stars. "They're really cool -- I've never seen them so clear before!"

"They are pretty neat, aren't they?"

George closed his eyes, letting himself enjoy the small moment of peace. He felt relaxed, untouchable. It was times like this, like the card game earlier, that he thought that maybe, just maybe, he had endured all of the pain he would ever have to. Like living with Sam and Tommy, growing closer with them, taking on the parental role with Sam was his reward for dealing with all of the pain in his life. He shook those thoughts away, there was still a part of him that was scared of getting too attached, and that it would only bring him pain.

"Do you see it now?" Sam whispered, breaking him out of his reverie. That's when he realized Sam moved even closer, pulling him flush against him, so close he felt the rise and fall of his chest, and how his soft lips just barely grazed the outside his ear.

He ignored his flushing cheeks, slowly opening his eyes and looking back towards the sky. There it was, the W. He smiled, relaxing further into Sam's chest. "I do, I see it!"

"This constellation is called Cassiopeia, named after a queen in Greek mythology," Tommy looked away from the telescope, focusing solely on the story, "She was a vain queen, the mother of Princess Andromeda, as beautiful the constellation, she was actually said to be put up there as

punishment.”

“Punishment?” Tommy asked, moving away from the telescope and coming closer, standing next to their side. George noticed then that he wasn’t wearing a jacket, and that his nose and cheeks were both pink. He frowned, moving out of Sam’s grasp to peel off his hoodie and hand it to the blonde, who frowned. “I’m not cold, Gogy, put it back on.”

“No,” He replied, “I’ll stay next to Sam, he can keep me warm -- put it on.” Tommy huffed, crossing his arms. George raised an eyebrow, shoving the hoodie into Tommy’s arms as Sam laughed behind them, “You don’t want to get sick, do you?”

“Maybe I do,” The teen replied, but he took the hoodie anyways and put it on, sinking into the warmth, “Sam, finish your story.”

Sam wrapped his arms around George again, seemingly happy to have an excuse to pull him close and envelop him in his warmth. “Cassiopeia was punished because she said her and her daughter were more beautiful than the sea nymphs, which was a great offence-”

George let the rest of the story fade into the background, watching the stars with flushed cheeks and a new sense of admiration. He loved how passionate Sam was about the stars, about mythology, and it was strangely intimate having him explain it, sharing his interests with the people he cared about. If they weren’t a family before, they were now.

Sam sighed as he stepped into Niki’s bakery, wishing he was on his way home already, but also wanting to make his boys happy.

He smiled as he thought about that. His boys. He was always teased about how he naturally fell into the overprotective-guardian role, but it fit. He loved having people waiting for him, he loved protecting and providing. As terrible as the circumstances were, which he still didn’t completely understand, he was glad for them. Glad they could come to him.

The bell jingled as the door closed, and the smell of freshly baked bread and vanilla surrounded him. Niki stepped in from the back room, smiling brightly, which he returned.

The door opened again, Quackity stepping through, nodding to him, and stepping behind him.

“Hey Sam,” Niki greeted warmly, “What can I get for ya?”

“Chocolate croissants?” He asked, eyeing some from behind the glass case. Tommy was right, they looked phenomenal.

Niki froze slightly, her smile faltering for just a moment before it was back up and she was grabbing a box, “How many?”

“Uhh, 12?”

“That’s a lot of pastries, Sam.” Quackity joked from behind him, it was lighthearted, but Sam’s heart started to race. No one could know who they were for.

He coughed awkwardly, “Yeah, but they look good.”

Quackity hummed, Sam could feel the burning gaze from him staring at him. With each passing moment as Niki packed them into the box, his heart rate increased. What was taking so long?

Eventually she placed them on the counter and rang him up, telling him his total. As he grabbed the necessary payment, she spoke, so quiet he barely heard her.

“I haven't had someone buy the chocolate croissants since Tommy.”

Sam dropped the currency on the counter, his cheeks growing hot, his heart racing. He hated lying, always had. “Oh, uh, my bad,” He said, picking it up and handing it to her, “I don't know what came over me.”

“It's fine,” Niki reassured, handing him his change, but before he could turn to leave, she spoke again, “Sam, have you heard from George by chance?”

He swallowed thickly, shaking his head, his heart thundering in his chest, “Nope, why do you ask?”

Quackity stepped forward, coming to his side. Sam could feel him eyeing him up and down, “He came back, saw Niki and told her that he had been asleep for a month, and that he was going to find Tommy.”

George had come to Niki? He had been *asleep* ? For a *month*? Sam's head was going a mile an hour, he needed to talk to George, asap.

“That's, that's strange... Well I haven't heard from him.” He coughed, taking a step back, but Quackity stopped him before he could get far.

“Sam, Tubbo went to find Tommy, bring him back as a big ‘fuck you’ to Dream... He wasn't there, but a tower and a crater was.” Sam inhaled sharply as he put two and two together. A crater, a tower, the reason George had taken him and the reason neither of them wanted to be apart. He felt sick. “Tubbo's making a memorial for Tommy, he's convinced he's dead.”

Niki sighed, moving from behind the counter to the door to lock it, “If you know something Sam, please tell us -- we've been making a plan to get rid of Dream, for good, and we think you could help.”

Sam exhaled sharply, running his hands over his face. He wanted to keep them safe, that was all that was important. As much as he loved them living with him, he didn't want them to be captives, they shouldn't have to live life looking over their shoulders. But could he trust Niki and Quackity?

Did he have a choice?

“They're both staying with me...” He resigned, “They have been for a while.”

“So Tommy *is* alive?” Niki asked, her eyes wide and hopeful, Sam felt like garbage for keeping secrets from her. She didn't deserve that.

He nodded, sitting down at one of the tables and setting down the box of pastries, Niki and Quackity following his actions and taking the seats in front of him.

“Listen, Sam,” Quackity spoke up, his serious tone sending shivers down Sam's spine. He hadn't ever heard him sound like that before, “I'm in a group, called the butcher army-”

“And I'm in the syndicate,” Niki butt in. Sam hadn't heard of either of these groups, but he wasn't exactly caught up to speed with the the events of the server, he had two people waiting for him at home to take care of.

“There’s not a person left on the server who likes Dream, not even George if he's hiding in your house.”

Sam’s eyebrows pinched, knowing exactly where this conversation was heading.

“We want to kill him -- or capture him. Whichever comes first.” Niki stared at him, making unsettling eye contact as she finished their... proposition. He couldn’t lie, there were worse things in the world than ridding their lives of Dream. If he helped, they could get justice for how he hurt his boys, and he could keep them safe.

He leaned forward, hands clasping and face hardening, “What do you need me to do?”

Chapter End Notes

give me song recommendations i dare u

chapter 6

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

hey babes, sorry for the late update, i am simply not vibing rn haha

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

What if we built guardian farms underneath? Mining through the obsidian and blackstone would be nearly impossible.”

Sam nodded, leaning against the table of Niki's bakery, writing the idea down. They had been brainstorming nonstop and had gotten pages worth of ideas of how to capture Dream. They couldn't leave anything up to chance.

His stomach growled, reminding him of how late it was. Looking out the window, he winced, the soon to set sun a glaring reminder that he was late for dinner.

“That's not a bad idea, Quackity,” Niki responded, “I would have never thought of that.” At Quackity's smile, she stood up, heading behind the counters. “They would be hard to make, but it would definitely be worth it.”

“It would be.” Sam agreed absentmindedly, chewing on the inside of his cheek as he stared out the window. He was split, wanting to go home more than anything and see his boys, but he knew the sooner they finished the prison the sooner all of this would be over.

Keeping the secret of the prison was weighing heavy on his mind, among other things. He still had yet to mention to George that he knew about how he apparently slept for a month, though he still didn't know why, and that he knew about Tommy's tower. He didn't want to pressure them, he wanted them to come to him only when they were ready.

A small part of him feared that he was sacrificing building their trust by continuously coming and going and keeping secrets. But it was what he had to do to keep them safe, and that was what was most important.

He knew for a fact that if he told George what he was doing, working with Quackity and Niki to take down Dream, he would get worried and want to be involved. *Or get mad* . He didn't know how George felt about Dream anymore, and if he was being honest he was afraid to ask.

“Sam-”

He turned to Niki, who came back to the table, settling a box in front of him. Chocolate croissants. He smiled.

“You go home, make sure they’re okay -- we can handle brainstorming tonight.”

He didn’t need to be told twice, standing from the table and stifling a yawn. It was times like this he regretted his decision to make his house so far from the SMP, he didn’t have the energy to come and go so often. But the inconvenience of living so far was a small price to pay for safety.

Before he left, Quackity stopped him, grabbing his wrist and dark eyes gleaming with concern.

“Be safe, Sam.”

“You too.”

The trip home seemed to take ages, his exhaustion and anticipation to see his boys making the ice bridge unbearably long. When he passed through the last portal, his heart started racing. He prayed that George and Tommy weren’t in bed already and that he could see them before he had to go to bed, only to leave before the sun came up.

He cursed as the door grumbled open, he really needed to work on making it quieter, especially since he was coming home later every day.

A plate was on the table, food cold and untouched. His heart warmed at the sentiment, but his guilt quickly overpowered it. They were waiting for him.

He made his way past the kitchen, towards where Fran was laying in front of a crackling fire, nearly jumping out of his skin when the blanket on the couch moved, George peeking out from underneath.

“Sam?”

Walking closer to the couch, he realized just how exhausted he was. He wanted to lay with George and Tommy, who was curled up in his usual spot like a cat, head on George's side.

He took a second to take it in, a soft smile tugging his lips, and his chest warming at the sight. It was nice... domestic. It felt like home. He never wanted it to end.

George yawned, stretching and matching his smile, the one that always made Sam melt. His eyes reflected the warm light of the fire, slumping back against the cushions. It was incredibly endearing.

Sam licked his lips, clearing his throat before settling by George’s other side. He smelt good, like he always did, and he noticed then the smaller man was wearing one of his favorite hoodies. His heart hammered at the sight, a slight bit of possessiveness flooding into his chest, thinking about how good George looked when he was *his*. He bit back the urge to put his lips to his, to see if his lips felt as soft as they looked, leaving him with marks that would show he was his in a different way.

He took a deep breath, ripping himself from those thoughts. He couldn’t be having those thoughts; George trusted him, he came to him for help. He couldn’t take advantage of that. He couldn’t be like Dream.

His breath stuttered when George leaned into his side.

“How was your day?” George mumbled, rubbing his eyes with his sweater paws, leaning his head against Sam’s shoulder. He swooned, extraordinarily grateful George was getting more comfortable with his touch.

He sighed, titled so George could be more comfortable. He wrapped an arm around his shoulders, pulling him in close. He couldn't ever tell George about his feelings, but sometimes he had to be a little selfish. He was just too warm to resist.

"Long," He said simply, staying vague on purpose, "I missed you guys."

George hummed, nuzzling against Sam's shirt, eyes half-lidded and hands wrapping around his side. Sam couldn't help the content sigh that fell past his lips, a warm blush heating his cheeks. He was relieved that George wasn't mad about him missing dinner yet again.

"We miss *you* ," George murmured, "Tommy keeps asking where you are -- and I don't know what to tell him." Just like that, the relief shattered. He once again fought the desire to come clean, tell him that he knew about everything, tell him about the prison. God, he hated secrets. "I told him you have a project, but he didn't believe me."

Sam inhaled sharply, chewing on the inside of his cheek until the bitter taste of copper tainted his tongue. His eyebrows pursed, and his heart raced. George deserved the absolute world. He deserved someone who was honest. Sam hated that that person couldn't be him.

"You, uh, you're not wrong, George-" He finally replied, checking that George didn't fall asleep when there was no response. He smiled when he looked down only to meet George's eyes, wide and waiting for him to continue. "I have been working on a project, it's uh, something I've never really done before, it's just taking a bit longer than I anticipated."

George hummed, nodding slightly and closing his eyes, head falling back against Sam's chest.

"Do you promise?"

Sam barely caught the question, eyebrows furrowing as he tried to figure out what George meant. "Promise what, George?"

Another moment of silence fell between them, and Sam once again wondered if he fell asleep, but soon George readjusted, pushing against him so he was sitting up and looking at him in the eyes.

"That it's a project-" George's tone was timid, his fingers playing with the hem of Sam's hoodie, but his eyes steeled. The juxtaposition sent Sam reeling, waves of anxiety crashing into his chest, heart racing. George had always been too keen about sensing when he was lying, and he prayed that he could keep it together. "Promise me that you didn't change your mind -- about us being here, about helping us."

Sam couldn't think straight, head foggy from his exhaustion and George's intense gaze. He pulled George back into him, arms wrapping around him and holding him like if he let go for even a second he would melt from his grasp. He placed his lips to the top of his head, pressing small kisses to his hair and forehead. He needed George to know his absence wasn't his fault.

"There is absolutely nothing in this world that could make me change my mind about helping you guys," He replied earnestly, shifting on the cushion to readjust their weight, faltering when Tommy grumbled in his sleep and readjusted himself. "This is your home now too," He whispered, "I'm glad you're here, both of you."

Sam wiped a hand over his forehead, cringing at the feeling of beads of sweat running down the nape of his neck and making his shirt stick to him. The blueprints had finally been finished and perfected, and he was now able to start construction, just finishing the foundation.

He dreaded thinking about how long constructing the prison would take, but he knew the sooner he got it done, the sooner Dream was out of their lives for good. He had already discussed it with Niki and Quackity, telling them he wanted to run the prison and choose the guards himself. He couldn't leave anything up to chance.

He took a second to rest, squinting as the bright sun reflected on the water surrounding the foundation, contrasting starkly against the blackstone and obsidian. It wasn't the easiest place he could have built, but he needed the water for the guardians, and he had to admit, the aesthetic wouldn't be bad either.

He was a redstoner first and foremost, but he did pride his builds on being decorated and designed to the highest qualities as well.

"Sam?"

He turned, smiling and greeting Tubbo as he made his way onto the large obsidian foundation. Quackity had taken care of getting the permits and permission for the prison to be built off of the grounds of L'Manburg, telling Sam that Tubbo wanted to come by and see it. Presidential duties he assumed.

Sam liked Tubbo, he was always a good kid, just misguided. But now when he looked at him, he saw Tommy. He couldn't tell if that was a good or a bad thing.

There was that same desire to protect him, just like with Tommy, but there was also guilt. He noticed the bags under Tubbo's eyes, and the way he looked seconds away from fainting. He still believed his best friend was dead. But as awful as Sam felt about that, he knew they had to keep it that way. If Dream came to harass Tubbo, which they all knew it was just a matter of time before he did, then they couldn't risk him slipping up. Dream couldn't know where Tommy or George were, no matter the cost.

That didn't make it any easier to look Tubbo in the eyes, however. He was just a child, he didn't deserve this. He bit back the desire to scoop him up and take him home, keep him safe like George and Tommy. Tubbo didn't have a family, either.

"How're you doin' Tubbo?" Sam asked, looking for any way to help the teenager without compromising his boys, other than literally kidnapping him. He didn't miss Tubbo's slight flinch at the question, or the way he forced an obviously-fake smile onto his lips.

"I'm fine, how are you?"

"I'm good, I'm good, just thinking about how long this build is going to take me," Sam bit back a groan as he just then realized each bit of lava in the build he would have to bring back from the nether himself, "But hey -- at least it will be worth it in the end, right?"

Tubbo nodded, chewing on his lip as he followed Sam around the platform, giving him the courteous, "uh huh's" and nods when he pointed out the different sections. They came to a stop when they reached the pit, which signified the area in which he was building the main cell.

"Can I ask you something, Sam?" Sam looked to Tubbo, whose gaze was intent on the pit in front of them, the chill breeze blowing his hair out of place, his small horns peeking out from which.

Sam nodded, before realizing Tubbo was focused on the ground beneath them. "Shoot."

"Dream is a menace, I mean, he- he killed Tommy," Sam bit his tongue, "I don't have any reason to go against the prison being built, but-" Tubbo raised his head, eyes flicking to meet Sam's.

Suddenly it was a lot harder to breathe under his mask. Tubbo inhaled sharply, “Why do *you* care? Dream’s never hurt you, why do *you* want him locked away?”

A tense silence fell between them as Sam carefully considered his next words, finally resigning to telling the truth, just not completely.

“I uh, I knew him a long time ago, back when there was only the community house.” Sam felt the familiar hot white anger sparking in his chest as he recalled the reason he left, “I’m going to tell you a secret, Tubbo,” Tubbo’s eyes widened, “I used to have feelings for George-”

Tubbo’s mouth dropped open, eyebrows raising. Sam tried not to think too hard about how the *used to* part of his sentence left the foul aftertaste of a lie on his tongue.

“Dream didn’t like that, he always needed to be in control, you know that better than anyone,” Sam shifted his weight between his feet, wiping a hand over the back of his neck, “The reason I left was because of him, and when I did, he uh- he hurt George.”

Tubbo hummed, wiping a stray tear that fell down his cheek, “Yeah, he’s uh, he’s good at that.”

Sam didn’t respond, drowning in his thoughts, he once again pictured George, in a coma, and Tommy, on top of a tower. Every time he started to think that maybe, just maybe, the plans for the prison were too much, he thought about that. He deserved everything that was coming, meals of raw potatoes and walls of lava included.

“You know that I’m here for you, right Tubbo?” He asked after a moment, patting the teenagers back, swallowing down the urge to come clean about Tommy then and there, “You can always come to me if you need to talk.”

Tubbo cleared his throat, blinking the rest of the tears from his eyes, shaking Sam’s hand off of his shoulder, his lips pursed into a tight line, “I should get going.”

Sam nodded, knowing that he had a lot on his plate. He would just have to work on gaining *his* trust, too.

Warm sunlight peered through the curtains, waking Sam from a dream he couldn’t remember, but knew he enjoyed. He took a deep breath, contentment filling his veins like honey, saccharine sweet, making him sink deeper into his mattress, duvet wrapping around him like a hug. He let his eyes slip back shut, nuzzling his head against the pillow.

That was until he realized it was far later than when he usually woke up, and that he was late to start working on the prison. He was making steady progress on the build, most of the walls and redstone complete, but he still had quite a bit to go.

He quickly climbed out of bed, throwing the duvet back onto the mattress haphazardly, tired shoulders screaming in retaliation. He stifled a yawn, blinking the remnants of sleep from his eyes and ignoring the soreness in his muscles. There were more important things in his life than some sore muscles.

He had no desires of staying home any longer than necessary, wanting to leave and get to work, but when he stepped out of his room, and saw George and Tommy sitting at the table eating breakfast, that desire shattered. It was easy to leave in the mornings when he didn’t have to face them, but now, the last thing he wanted was to leave the house.

George and Tommy both jumped when he walked in, George’s eyes widening and Tommy

smiling, Sam found himself returning the action.

“Big man! You’re home!” Tommy cheered, his excitement contagious, spreading like a wildfire in Sam’s heart. He moved to the table without a second thought, all desires of leaving gone. He could work tomorrow.

George quickly stood up, grabbing another plate and setting it in front of Sam - despite his protests - when George suddenly smacked the back of his head.

“AH! Hey- what was that for?!” He rubbed the back of his head, pouting when Tommy laughed, George crossed his arms over his chest and glared at him, lips pursed into a tight line.

“You didn’t tell me you were home!” George scolded, hands moving to his hips, reminding Sam of a disappointed mom, “What is actually wrong with you?”

“I was asleep!”

George huffed, returning to his original seat, mumbling under his breath the entire time. Sam didn’t know why the situation had him so flustered, maybe it was the domestic feeling of eating breakfast with his two favorite people, or maybe it was that he was missed, either way it left him feeling like a teenager with a crush.

Except this was so much stronger than a crush, his heart was pounding against his ribcage, and he knew that if they continued down this path, he wouldn’t be able to hide his feelings anymore. It was only a matter of time before George caught on, especially with the smirk Tommy was giving him. He was surprised the teen hadn’t said anything yet.

“So, Sammy, why *are* you here?” George asked, the nickname sounding like velvet on his tongue, and this time he didn’t apologize for the slip-up. Maybe, this time it wasn’t a slip-up. “You’re usually gone by now, working on your *mysterious* project.”

“Are you ever going to tell us what that project *is* ?” Tommy interrupted, shoveling bits of melon into his mouth. Sam’s foot began to bounce.

He cleared his throat, taking a sip of water, “I guess I was pretty tired, slept longer than I meant to,” As if on cue, he yawned, rolling his eyes when his boys laughed, “And as for the *mysterious project* -- you can see it when it’s done.”

Tommy huffed, glaring as he drank some of his orange juice, accidentally spilling some down his chin, which Sam snorted at.

They fell into a comfortable conversation, which eventually turned into friendly bickering between George and Tommy. Sam knew then that he was home, that he was where he was supposed to be.

He remembered how much it hurt to leave the SMP, to leave his friends and go off by himself. He needed the space, and he didn’t regret the decision he made, not exactly. He just wished he hadn’t been pushed to that, or that he convinced George to come with him. He loved the freedom, but no one had ever told him that freedom was so lonely.

When he was sitting in front of Tommy and George, he was afraid, sure, but it felt right. The situation wasn’t ideal, hiding from a psychopath and all, but he liked to think they would have found each other even if Dream hadn’t pushed them. He didn’t like imagining what his life would be like without them.

“Wait? You play the piano?”

Sam came back to the conversation, which had shifted from Tommy's table manners to... pianos? His eyebrows furrowed.

"Huh?"

George drank some of his apple juice, licking his lips before responding. Sam tried not to stare at the action too intently.

"I was just telling him about how I used to sing a little bit -- apparently he plays piano?" He explained, Tommy shrugged, stabbing a piece of sausage on his plate and biting it. "I had no idea, Tomothy."

"Ugh, why do you call me that, *Gogy*-" Tommy mumbled, mouth full, George smacked his arm, muttering something about how he lived with heathens, Tommy rubbed his arm, glaring at him, "But yeah, I used to play when I lived with Phil," Sam frowned at the mention of his pseudo-father, he had noticed the preference for Techno, and how he basically left Tommy to fend for himself, he couldn't fathom ever letting that happen, "I was pretty good if I say so myself."

"You should play something for us sometime," Sam replied, realizing that despite Tommy and George living with him, there was still so much he didn't know about them. He wanted to know, everything, good and bad. He wanted to be the person they came to when they had a bad day, he wanted to be the person that could help make it better. He wanted it all.

He couldn't help but feel impatient, waiting for them to trust him like that. What else did he have to do? He quickly shook those thoughts away, chastising himself for pressuring them, even in his head. They would tell him about what happened when they were ready, he just had to wait, and when they did, he would be supportive, be the protector they deserved.

His heart thrummed with fondness watching the two quickly move on, Tommy throwing a piece of fruit at George, who scoffed and threw a little bit of egg in return. Sam's lips pulled into a smile, head falling in his hands, the warm laughter filling his once empty home with a cozy ambiance.

There was no denying it, not anymore. A piece of fruit landed in his hair, and he laughed, caught in the crossfire, before joining in the food-fight. The way Tommy looked at him, blue eyes searching for safety and validation, he was the closest thing to a son or younger brother he had ever dreamed of having.

George laughed, loud and breathless, drawing Sam's attention to him, his heart warming, but in a different way. He had known George for years, his flaws and all, and he still found himself hopelessly in love with him. It was something he had tried desperately to ignore, but it never left.

No matter what came from this, even if George decided he wanted to leave after Dream was imprisoned, he would never blame him, or hate him. He just wanted him to be happy.

Sam leaned back against the chair, watching his boys with gentle adoration. There was no way he could ever let them get hurt, and he suddenly felt solidified in his decisions, both to take them in and to work with Niki and Quackity. He loved them far too much to let any harm come to them.

He cleared his throat, before picking up another piece of egg and throwing it at Tommy, laughing as his mouth gaped.

"I missed this." He said finally, mostly to himself. Missed having a family, missed laughing in the mornings, missed spending time with them. He dreaded having to go back to working on the prison. George and Tommy both stopped throwing the food, matching smiles breaking onto their

faces as they turned to Sam.

George's head fell into his hand, looking up at him through his eyelashes, brown eyes golden with mirth, head tilted.

"I did too."

Chapter End Notes

ily all

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

would it even be one of my fics if there wasn't some angst?

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

George was pissed.

The countertop matched his burning gaze, taunting him. His hands were curled into fists at his sides, teeth clenched together so hard they could almost shatter.

Laying on top of the polished marble were worn pieces of paper, blueprints, and depictions of a place, a prison, labeled as 'Pandora's Vault.' He didn't have to leap far to land on the assumption that this was Sam's secret project.

He thumbed through the pages, hot white anger burning through his chest, growing hotter and hotter with each word he read. Guardian farms, walls of lava, a lifetime of raw potatoes; all of this and for Dream. There was nothing that said his name, or that it was for him, but he knew.

Who else would warrant such an intricate jail?

That's not what made him mad, though. He found that he really didn't care that Dream would be locked away, trapped in an obsidian cell with lava walls and no chance of escape. It was a relief actually, knowing that he and Tommy would be safe.

What made him mad, was that Sam kept it from him. They were supposed to be a team, they were supposed to be able to trust each other. Did he not trust him after all? He was putting himself in incredible amounts of danger by just *thinking* about capturing Dream. What if something happened? And he got hurt? Or worse, killed? He and Tommy wouldn't know for days.

He shook his head, trying to rid the images of Sam dead, lying in a ditch somewhere. Tommy wouldn't recover. *He* wouldn't recover.

"George, you're up early—" He flinched, watching as Sam froze when he noticed what he was looking at.

The silence that followed was suffocating, so still they could hear a pin drop.

Eventually, Sam sighed, running a hand through his hair and coming to George's side, reaching a hand out to grasp his own, he pulled his hand away, refusing to look up at him.

“You weren’t supposed to see those,” Sam mumbled, making no effort to lie, which he appreciated, “I must have forgotten to move them when I got home last night.”

George scoffed, stepping away from the counter and moving to the sink to wash his hands. All of this aside, he still needed to make breakfast.

He didn’t want to look at Sam, he felt far too conflicted. He knew he didn’t have bad intentions, if there was one thing he knew about Sam it’s that he had ridiculously strong morals and followed them, no matter what. He was kind, and sweet, and generous. It made his heart race.

But on the other hand, he lied. He kept this *massive* secret from him. He was supposed to be able to trust Sam, but how could he trust that he would come home? He was basically taunting the most powerful person on the server, asking him to come back and start problems.

Sam came back to his side, pulling his hand from the now steaming water. He hadn’t even noticed that the water was scorching his hand, the skin now an angry bright red. This time, he let himself be pulled into a hug.

He didn’t know just how upset he was until his head touched Sam’s chest, the floodgates opening, and tears instantly falling down his cheeks. He searched for his heartbeat out of pure instinct, the steady rhythm soothing him like a lullaby.

“I’m so sorry, Georgie,” Sam whispered, his own breath stuttering in his chest, “I didn’t want to keep it from you, I just—I didn’t want to worry you.”

He huffed, raising his head and meeting Sam’s eyes, stubbornness radiating off of him. He pulled away from him, his anger crashing back into him ten-fold. “So you just decided to lie? For months? There’s a difference between a secret project and building a fucking prison—”

“George—”

“No! Let me speak,” He was practically seething, exasperated tears flowing freely down his cheeks, “You took us in, you’ve kept us safe, we trust you! How can you just go out and spend months putting your life at risk when you have us waiting for you here?! We care about you! We love you!”

Sam opened his mouth, but George cut him off before he could speak, his fury fading and showing his true feelings, pure, unadulterated concern, “I don’t want you to get hurt—I want you here, home, with us.”

A couple beats of silence passed, the air thick with tension, stuck in a standoff as they stared each other down.

Sam was the first to break, closing his eyes and inhaling deeply. “I know, George,” He whispered, “I know about the tower, about the sleep—I know.”

George froze, heart thundering in his chest. How did he know? He had been so careful about keeping it a secret. Did Sam find him as pathetic as he found himself?

“Tubbo found the tower, h-he thinks Tommys dead,” Sam explained, face fallen. George wrapped his arms around himself, guilt drowning him as he remembered all of the people waiting for the boy’s return, they didn’t know he found him in exile and brought him to Sam’s. They didn’t know he was okay.

“Niki and Quackity were the ones who told me about the sleeping thing, though I don’t completely

understand it.”

He swallowed thickly, looking to Tommy’s door, a fresh batch of tears filling his eyes as Sam finished his explanation. “The sleep doesn’t matter,” he butt in, “What matters is Tommy, keeping him safe.”

He looked back into Sam’s eyes, shielding the pain, the guilt, everything.

“You can’t keep him safe if you’re dead, Sam.”

With that, he left the room, going straight into the teen’s room. He didn’t want to wake him, but he needed to see for himself that he was okay, smiling when he saw him curled up around Fran, sleeping soundly, and he climbed under the covers.

“Can I talk to you, big man?”

Sam looked away from the pot where he was cooking dinner, forcing his lips into a smile and facing Tommy. It had been days since George found out about the prison, and as much as they tried to keep everything hidden from Tommy, he knew it was only a matter of time before he caught on.

It was the same thing every day, he woke up, went to work, thinking about his boys the entire time, only to come home earlier than he should with a box of chocolate croissants. The uneaten pastries were piling up, as the two boys couldn’t possibly keep up with the constant supply, but he couldn’t bring himself to stop.

He gently placed down the wooden spoon, giving Tommy his full attention. “What’s up bud?” He asked, watching as the teenager chewed on his nail, eyes flickering between Fran, the pot, and George, who was asleep on the couch, before settling on Sam.

“Is everything okay?”

Sam sighed, giving up the little hope he had that Tommy wanted to talk about the stars, or archery, or anything except what was going on. He was too smart to not see what was happening, how his and George’s conversations had been tense and short, and how they had both been far more distant lately. He hated himself for worrying the boy.

“We uh, we had a small disagreement is all,” Sam admitted, not sure where the boundary lies between being honest and dumping his problems on Tommy. The argument wasn’t even bad, but George had a bad habit of shutting down whenever hurt, and he didn’t want to make it worse. “It’s nothing, don’t worry about it.”

Tommy huffed, crossing his arms over his chest and staring at him, calling his bluff.

“Ugh fine, okay,” He resigned, swallowing thickly, “He doesn’t like how often I’ve been gone. This project I have, it’s big, bigger than anything I’ve ever done before, and important, too! But he doesn’t think it’s worth it, not if it means I have to keep leaving. But it’ll all be fine, I promise, bud.”

“You aren’t Dream, big man, neither is George,” Tommy replied after a moment, eyes distant as he thought about what to say next. Sam’s eyebrows raised, not sure where he was going with this. “Dream did bad things, he uh, he liked control, right? But you aren’t him.”

Tommy sighed, chewing his lip, “What I mean is that... Look, Gogy came to you for a reason,

right? He came to you when we were at our most vulnerable. He trusts that you aren't like Dream, that you'll work with him and not hurt him—so, I don't know, just do that, work with him.”

Sam nearly melted, pride flowing freely through him. He was so grateful that George did trust him enough to come to him, and that he brought them both into his life.

“You're too good, Toms.”

“I know! I'm incredible!”

George laid in Tommy's bed, fingers padding circles over his shoulder. He couldn't sleep, consumed by his thoughts. He had been with Sam and Tommy for months now, but sometimes when his anxiety was especially bad, the trouble sleeping came back.

And god was he anxious.

Ever since the conversation with Sam, he had been overwhelmed with guilt. He stood by everything he had said, but he wished he had been able to keep his emotions inside. He felt like how he acted when he was with Dream, reacting first and thinking later. It was immature.

Sam made him a better person, he knew that. It felt right to be with him, to protect a traumatized teenager with him. He never got mad when he disagreed with him, always staying kind. He was an adult, whereas Dream still acted like a teenager. Just a teenager with a large arsenal of weapons, knowledge of PVP, and keen skills of manipulation.

We love you.

He was being honest when he said that. He did love Sam, endlessly. But as much as he loved living with him and spending time with him, he found that it wasn't enough, and that realization made him realize why Sam's growing absence hurt so bad.

His cheeks grew red, instinctually licking his lips. He didn't want Sam to leave, because he wanted him all to himself. He wanted his family safe, locked away where no one could hurt them ever again, as selfish as it was.

George huffed, closing his eyes, hand stalling on Tommy's side. It was pointless trying to sleep, really, he knew it was happening. A glance at the clock on the wall and he saw the sun would be rising soon anyways, and he decided to get up and make breakfast.

He had gotten better about not sleeping in Tommy's room, but sometimes the boy would come to him in the middle of the night, teary-eyed and trembling. He wasn't the only one who had trouble sleeping, only Tommy's manifested itself in nightmares rather than insomnia. The nightmares used to scare the shit out of him and Sam, and sometimes still did, but as they got to know the boy better they learned how to help him through it.

It made him realize that despite living with Tommy and Sam, there was still so much he had left to learn about them.

The chill morning air made him shiver, immediately making him miss the warmth of the bed, but he continued out of the room, stopping in his tracks when he saw what was in the living room.

Tucked against a wall was a piano, black lacquer reflecting the soft light of the lanterns, a large box on top of it, the logo of Niki's bakery on its side.

He couldn't help the smile that tugged on his lips, a series of quiet giggles escaping his throat.

"Oh- George!"

He turned to Sam, who was carrying a bouquet of cornflowers and baby's breath, cheeks flushing as he made eye contact with George.

"I didn't know you were awake, I uh, well, surprise?"

George's smile turned into a full-blown grin, eyes glimmering with mirth as Sam awkwardly handed him the flowers, cheeks red.

"You- I- What is this?" He asked, smelling the flowers, and looking up at Sam through his eyelashes. His heart was racing, but it wasn't like when he was angry, or scared. It was exciting, exhilarating, he wanted more.

"I, well, I felt bad about the deal with the prison," Sam explained, "I was talking to Tommy and he made me realize something," George let him take the flowers from his hands, watching as he placed them on top of the piano before pulling him into a tight hug. Sam was oh so clingy, but it didn't bother him so much anymore. It made him feel safe, "I realized that as important as the prison is, you two are even more so. I love you both -- so much. I'm not stopping construction, but I promise I'm going to be around more."

George melted in his hold, and he nuzzled his face into his chest, inhaling the scent of his cologne. If he had to stay in one spot for the rest of his life, he would be happy right there. "A compromise."

Sam rubbed his back, placing feather-light kisses to the top of his head, making his heart stop momentarily.

"A compromise."

Chapter End Notes

hi if ur reading this bc u have a bad home life / unhealthy family, guess what? I'm ur family now :)

fr don't be afraid to message me on any platforms if need be <3
slushiesfor car on tumblr
saquashing on twitter

Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

sorry lmao i rlly was like "i'll update early this time!" and then i.. didn't

lol my b

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

George always liked the sun. Nothing was more refreshing to him than feeling the warm rays on his skin, bringing out the faintest of freckles. He liked the way the sun brought the flowers and how it reflected off of the water, illuminating the world around him.

He and Tommy could only go outside every so often, not wanting to risk being seen more than necessary. But even Sam, who was incredibly protective over them, saw how being outside in the fresh air lifted their spirits.

The only condition when they went out, was that Sam stayed by their sides the entire time, but honestly, George was completely okay with that. Especially since Sam had kept the promise he had made him, leaving far less often and coming home sooner.

Sometimes he felt like a trophy wife, staying home with their basically adopted teenager, waiting for his husband to return home. He almost laughed at the thought. Both because of how ridiculous it was, and because he found that he didn't really mind that idea.

He had always been stupidly independent, or stubborn as Dream would say, but he found that he liked having someone there that he could rely on, that he could work with and share his time with. It was the healthiest relationship he had ever had, and they weren't even dating. George brushed past how much he wanted to change that.

"George -- look," Sam's cheerful voice broke him out of his reverie, he looked to where Sam was hunched over, gardening in the new bee enclosure, then to where he was motioning.

Tommy was laughing, running through the field as Fran chased after him, tail wagging. George fell back on his elbows, watching them with a small smile. It wasn't ideal, the situation they were in, but it was times like this where he felt awfully content. Where he felt safe.

He honestly could have fallen asleep right there, comfort flowing through his veins like honey, making him yawn. But what if Tommy got hurt and needed his help? Or what if Dream found them? He needed to be ready, just in case.

Sam's hand brushed against his side, making him jump slightly.

“Sorry, I was just uh-”

George didn’t wait for him to finish, moving so he could lay his head in Sam’s lap, looking up at him like it was no big deal, despite his flushing cheeks.

“Oh,” Sam whispered, running his fingers through his hair, before placing something light on his chest. George squinted, raising his own hands to pick up the object, a small dandelion, “I picked you a flower...”

George twirled the stem between his fingertips, yellow petals dancing as he did so.

“It’s a weed, actually,” He joked, biting his lip to keep from laughing when Sam frowned, “Tommy’s right, you *are* a sap.”

“Pfft, says you,” Sam shot back, returning to his task but being mindful not to jostle George as he did so, “ *Ooh Sam, I miss you, ooh Sam come home.* ”

George huffed, burrowing his face into Sam’s shirt in an attempt to hide his burning cheeks. “Shud’up” He mumbled, the shirt muffling his voice, making Sam laugh.

Eventually, Sam dropped the hand shovel and leaned back, wiping a dirt-caked hand over his forehead. “I don’t know if I’ve told you this yet, George,” He perked up at his name, looking back up to meet Sam’s eyes, “But thank you.”

His eyebrows furrowed, watching Sam’s expression carefully, noting how he couldn’t meet his gaze. “Why are you thanking *me* ? You’re the one who’s kept us safe.”

“Thank you for trusting me, I guess,” He answered, sucking in a breath, “I really appreciate it.”

George welcomed the comfortable silence that came after that, not entirely sure what to say. He had other friends, sure. But Sam was just, well, right. He couldn’t imagine coming to anyone else.

After a moment, he propped himself up, not noticing Sam’s frown as he did so, “Do you remember that old cat -- the one that lived in the woods behind the community house, before it was torn down?”

“I do,” Sam smiled, looking to the ground, “We named him Newspaper.”

George giggled, eyes briefly flickering to Tommy to make sure he was still good, “Yeah, that wasn’t our most creative work.”

“What do you mean? I think Newspaper is a fantastic name,” Sam laughed, eyes glimmering with the pleasant memory, “But what about him? Why’d you bring him up?”

“I remembered how we used to bring him our leftover fish, and how he almost instantly warmed up to us,” George remembered, fiddling with the blades of grass beneath him, “After you left, I uh, went to feed him,” Sam’s eyebrows pinched, and he looked to George, “Dream saw me, and he got mad, he told me it was a waste of food... I uh, I never went back after that.”

Sam hummed, clenching his jaw so hard the muscles in his neck shot out. George laid his head back in his lap, this time looking past Sam and towards the pretty blue sky.

“We should get a cat,” Sam said eventually. George didn’t miss the anger that laced his voice, no doubt thinking about Dream. “I miss Newspaper.”

“Tommy would love that,” He agreed, rolling on his side so he could watch the teenager, who was now climbing a tree, “Fran though, probably not so much.”

“You’re doing a really good job helping him, you know that?” Sam replied, “I know neither of you have had it easy, but at least you have each other.”

“Hey -- We have *you* , too.”

“Okay, Sap.”

“Shut up.”

Sam leaned back in his chair, cracking his neck and flexing his arms in front of him, wincing at the loud pops of his joints. The construction of the prison was finally complete, the intricate redstone working just as he hoped, testing it all relentlessly as he built.

But now came the most important part, choosing who to ask to become guards. Yes the building was so incredibly important, but if any of the people who he chose to become guards fell into Dream’s manipulation, it was basically worthless.

Quackity had enough on his plate, helping Tubbo with the expansion of L’Manburg and keeping everything running smoothly, falling right into his role as a businessman. Niki, when asked, said she wanted to stay out of that ‘hell hole’ and away from the abomination that was Dream and the mistake that was the government. Both telling him that their respective groups would help capture Dream, but that's where their interference would stop.

He understood. It was a big ask.

But he needed to figure something out, and soon. He couldn’t stand to see his boy’s resolve fade, as much as he loved having them around.

He noticed how as time went on, they became more and more content to hide away forever. They deserved better.

Then there was Tubbo.

He had been making sure to check up on him, bringing him food whenever possible and making small conversation. But he saw how his once bright eyes were faded, coated in exhaustion and steeped in sadness.

As soon as Dream was locked away, he would ask Tubbo to stay with him. Both for Tubbo’s sake and Tommy’s. Neither of them should be separated from each other any longer.

Plus he knew George would love having someone else to smother, as much as he denied it.

His lips pulled into a small smile thinking about George. The man was basically perfect, the closest thing to an angel he had ever seen, sassy, rude, but so compassionate and warm he could make the arctic melt.

Every moment he spent with him, the words *I love you* threatened to escape. More often than not he found himself biting his tongue, being oh so careful as to not mess up his friendship with the other man.

He had hurt him enough by leaving the first time, he didn’t want to put him through that again, as

George still thought it was his fault.

The sounds of laughter flowed into the room, shortly followed by some notes of the piano, the song, while slightly out of tune, relaxed him more than he liked to admit. Or maybe it was just knowing they were happy, even if just for a moment. That's all he wanted really, them to be happy.

The music kept playing, the first few bars of Fur Elise playing before it stopped, only to start again from the beginning. George walked into the room, a bright grin on his face that Sam couldn't help but match.

"You look tense," George quipped, sitting by his side and leaning his head onto his shoulder. Sam prayed he couldn't hear his racing heart, blood rushing up the back of his neck.

"Thank you, George," He shot back, "You really know how to make me feel good."

A sharp pain shot through his arm, where George pinched him. He couldn't help but laugh when he met his pout, wrapping his arm around his shoulders to pull him closer.

"Is Tommy still trying to remember the song?"

He felt him nod against him, George's hands playing with his shirt, a quirk Sam had noticed he did whenever he was worried. Before he could ask what was wrong, George raised his head and met Sam's eyes.

"You're stressing about something," He said, "Did something happen?"

"No, no, nothing happened," He rushed out, fingers tracing circles onto George's side, smirking when the other melted at the action, "I'm just struggling finding people I trust to work at the prison is all."

George hummed, looking down at the list of people he had accumulated, leaning up and pointing to a name, "Purpled - absolutely not, we're not putting a child in there with Dream, I don't care if he turns 18 soon," He scratched out the name, "Where's Punz?"

Sam cleared his throat, biting his lip to stop from saying something embarrassing, finding George's sudden domineering attitude much more attractive than he should, "Uh, he uh, he's a mercenary isn't he?"

"He likes money, sure, but he hates Dream more," George explained, writing his name on the bottom of the list, even his handwriting was small compared to Sam's, "He tries to hide it, but he's actually really kind and loyal, once he finds out what happened, I'm sure he'll want to help. At least consider him."

Sam nodded, letting George take the reigns and carry on, "Antfrost and Bad, definitely, they're loyal, and while Bad has a lot of history with Dream, he knows when to not let emotion get in the way."

"Puffy, for sure," He continued, this suggestion making Sam raise his eyebrows.

"Didn't Puffy basically raise Dream?"

George huffed, glaring at him for interrupting him, "If you'd let me finish-" Sam raised his hands in surrender, trying and failing to stop himself from smiling, "Dream is important to her, but the most important thing to her is keeping kids safe. As soon as she hears he hurt Tommy, she'll be the

first one after him.”

They continued like that for a few minutes, discussing possible guards as the soft sounds of the piano played in the background.

No matter how long they stayed with him, he would never get used to the domesticity. It lulled him into a sense of security, one that he wasn't sure he could trust but desperately wanted to.

It was times like this, he knew his home was never meant to be silent.

As soon as they had an adequate list of names, Sam set off, presumably to ask them and then start planning the next part of the plan, getting Dream into prison.

George tried to annoy Sam into telling him he knew about the plan, but he could see his hesitation. A part of him wondered if Sam still believed he would choose Dream over him, that if he told him where he was or when he was last seen, he would leave him.

He trusted that Sam would tell him anything important, especially after their argument.

He knew an argument shouldn't make his heart flutter, but knowing that Sam could compromise, and that he's the type to let go of his grudges to work with him instead of get angry, it made him swoon.

As scared as he was, more and more he found himself reaching out for Sam's hand, laying on his lap, barely stopping himself from grabbing his blonde hair and kissing him senseless. But Sam let them into his house, literally built a prison from the ground up for them, he couldn't let that friendship get tainted, especially if it didn't work out.

Tommy's frustrated huff brought him back to reality, and despite his desperate attempt to fight his smile, his lips still pulled into a grin.

“Still struggling?”

The blonde turned to glare at him, flipping him off, “Fuck off, Gogs, you try rememebering a song you haven't played in years.”

George sat to his side on the bench, ignoring his lighthearted insults, poking some of the keys, “How did you start playing, anyways?”

Tommy slouched down, content to take a break from playing and letting his awful posture come back full fledged, “Phil had a piano,” His face fell as he continued, prompting George to rub his knee, “He uh, this song, it was his favorite.”

“I can see why, it's really nice.”

“You've barely heard it, Gogs,” Tommy huffed, glaring down at the ivory keys, “I don't know why I can't remember.”

“I've heard it before... Fur Elise, right?” George asked, pressing a couple of notes, the beginning of 'Heart and Soul', making Tommy raise his eyebrows. “I only know a couple songs, Tomothy, stop looking at me like that.”

The boy laughed, hitting his shoulders against George's, “I guess I shouldn't be surprised, all old people know Fur Elise.”

“You’re the one playing it, Tommy,” He snorted, “Are you saying you’re old?”

“Pfft, please Gogs, I’m just a little child, you can’t talk to me this way,” The blonde pouted for a moment, before breaking out into laughter, George following suit.

After they eventually calmed down, needing to catch their breath, Tommy sat up straight, slowly pressing a couple of the keys, closing his eyes as he worked his way through the first few bars, huffing when he hit the wrong note.

“I used to play this song all the time, Jesus Christ, why can’t I get it?”

“Relax, Tommy,” George said, rubbing his arm, “Don’t try to force it, it’ll come when it’s ready.”

Tommy’s head fell into his hands, elbows pressing against the keys, “Ugh but it’s so frustrating! I just want to remember!”

“I know, Toms, but there’s no need to rush. We have plenty of time for you to practice and remember, just be patient.”

“Is that what you’re doing?”

George’s eyebrows pinched, confused as to what Tommy was referring to, “What do you mean?”

The teenager readjusted, pulling his knees to his chest and looking at George with a scrutinizing gaze. “With Sam -- are you just being patient? Waiting for it to happen?”

It was times like this that George cursed how observant Tommy was, but he figured that it was just a byproduct of everything he’d been through, always needing to keep a careful eye on the people around him.

His first instinct was to deny it, to pretend he didn’t know what he was talking about, but Tommy deserved the truth.

“Am I really that obvious?”

Tommy snorted, pressing random keys on the piano, “Every time I look up you’ve found some way to lay on top of him, yeah I’d say you’re pretty fucking obvious.”

George groaned, rubbing a hand through his hair, his stomach fluttering, “Look, he just smells really good-”

“Simp-”

“Shut up, I’m not a simp,” He shot back, standing from the bench, needing to start dinner, Tommy following to help, “And I’m not being patient, because it will never happen.”

“Why not?” He asked, beginning to set the table before George could even ask, “He’s clearly in love with you, why don’t you just kiss him?”

George sputtered, grabbing the fish that Sam had brought them, “He’s not *in love* with me, he’s just being a good friend.”

“Are you fucking dumb, George?” George’s eyes widened at the blunt tone, looking at the teenager incredulously, “Sam has been in love with you for years, he’s even told me as such!”

The breath left George’s lungs, heart hammering in his chest. At first, he didn’t think he heard

Tommy right, or that this was some dumb prank and he was about to start laughing. But Tommy stared him down, face completely serious.

“...What?”

“He’s always been in love with you, Jesus Gogs, you are blind. He just doesn’t want to pressure you or hurt you, that’s all.”

George’s shoulders slumped, looking down onto the counter. This couldn’t be real, he had dreamt about being with Sam for months, craving to feel his lips against his, wondering what it would be like to spend the rest of his life with him. He never thought he’d live to see the day where those dreams were warranted.

“I don’t want to hurt him,” He admitted, setting down the knife, “I don’t want to ruin this.”

Tommy huffed out a laugh, rolling his eyes, “I don’t think that’s possible, George, I’ve seen the way he looks at you. You could commit arson and he would find it endearing.”

He laughed, feeling far lighter than he had in a long time. As soon as Sam came home, he would talk to him about this. They had wasted enough time, he just wanted to be his.

Sam got home just as George finished plating the fish, setting a bowl of steamed asparagus in the center of the table. He had promised himself he could wait till after dinner, that he wouldn’t act like a flustered idiot, but when Sam walked through the front door, eyes shining and perfectly pink lips pulled into a grin, he quite literally forgot how to act.

After a minute, Sam raised an eyebrow, walking to his side and grabbing his shoulder, and that’s when George realized that he had been talking.

“Sorry, what?”

Sam laughed, his chest shaking as he did so. George shouldn’t have found it as attractive as he did, he soon found himself laughing too.

“I asked why you were standing there,” He repeated, “Are you okay?”

He nodded, not trusting his voice at that very moment. Thankfully Tommy walked in, noticing George’s flustered state, rolling his eyes but saving him regardless.

“Welcome back, big man,” He greeted Sam, “George was supposed to tell you that dinner’s ready, but apparently his brain stopped working.”

“Is that true, George,” Sam asked, coming closer to his side, the low timbre of his voice sending lightning down his spine, “Did your brain stop working?”

George huffed, praying that his face wasn’t as red as he felt, and walked away. Flipping the two off when they started laughing, though they knew it was lighthearted.

He could barely sit still, leg bouncing and fingers tapping against the table. He didn’t even have an appetite, the need to tell Sam how he felt more important than the need to eat. The conversation was easy, nice, warm. It was perfect.

That was until they heard a creeper blow in front of the front door.

They all fell silent, eyes wide as they stared at the door, frozen in place until a large boom shook

the house, the front wall sending off pieces of dirt and stone as it tried to withstand the force of the blow.

George leapt from his seat at the table, rushing in front of Tommy just in time for the second explosion, pieces of rubble and shrapnel flying through the air.

“Tommy, go hide-” He commanded, not noticing he was hurt until the boy's eyes looked to George's abdomen, gasping. Sam rushed to his side.

Blood was pooling on his side, staining the shirt of Sam's he stole. A sharp pain shot through him, making him gasp and fall to his knees, Sam and Tommy holding onto him the entire time.

Upon hearing the hissing of more TNT, Tommy ran to the archery room, and Sam grabbed his axe, before quickly returning to his side.

It wasn't until the third, and final explosion did the door give way, leaving a gaping hole where strong stone and intricate redstone once stood.

George felt hot, overwhelmingly so, nausea hitting him in waves.

Finally, once the dust settled, a tall figure stepped through the rubble, the eerie smiley face mask sending shivers down his spine.

For a moment, everything was silent. The sounds of footsteps on debris fading into the background as the world became dizzy.

He faintly heard Sam's voice, bringing him back to reality, grounding him, telling him to stay awake.

He slowly raised his eyes, taking a moment to process Sam, in front of him, ready to strike, then moving to Dream, meeting the beady black eyes of the mask.

“Well, there's one traitor,” Dream sneered, taking a step closer, “Now where's the other?”

Chapter End Notes

i swear i've jinxed myself by writing this, now my mom and step dad are getting divorced lmfao

doesn't matter i'm still a bad b B)

hi everyone reading this i love u and ur important, i'm glad ur here and a part of my online family <333

Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

hey hi hello

hope ur ready for this one folks, it's a rollercoaster. strap in

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The lights of the archery room flickered, the redstone that lit the room jostled by the explosions. Tommy didn't pay attention to it, however, immediately searching for his recurve, which was hanging next to George's bow.

His hands trembled as he reached for the bow, inhaling sharply. He couldn't break down, not yet. He needed to protect George, he needed to help him, he was hurt.

Tommy chewed on his lip, tears threatening to fall as guilt flooded his chest. George was only hurt because of him, he saved him again by jumping in front of the shrapnel, and now he was hurt. If George died, he would never forgive himself.

His knees almost buckled at the thought.

The smell of gunpowder and ash burned his nose, soot coating his throat and scorching his lungs. He tried to remember what George and Sam taught him, during one of his panic attacks, weeks before, "Deep breath in" He mumbled, attempting to ground himself, but the familiar smell brought him back to that dreaded field.

"Hold for three seconds," He continued, room spinning around him. A small part of him wondered if he ever got out of that field, or if all of this was just a dream. "Breath out for six." His skin tingled, and then the awful thought came to him, that maybe he made it up that tower, and that all of this was some sick sort of afterlife or a coma.

He gagged, anxiety twisting his gut, flinching when something brushed past his side.

"C'mere, Fran," Tommy whispered, falling to his knees and laying his head against hers, lightly scratching behind her ears, "You need to stay in here, okay?" He cleared his throat, wiping the stray tears that had fallen, "Don't you worry, everything is going to be okay, okay?"

He heard Sam yell out George's name, making the blonde flinch. He wanted nothing more than to hide away, stay with Fran till Dream left, but he knew he couldn't do that.

"You don't have to be the hero, Tommy."

He remembered Techno's words, from back when he was only a child, after the legend of the

Blood God spread from each corner of the world, eventually reaching their small cottage in the woods.

“Heros rarely have the happy ending,” he said, staring into the distance with a fresh scar across his cheek, eyes foggy, Tommy on his lap. He had only asked if it was true, if he had really hurt all of those people. “Have you heard the story of Theseus?”

Tommy shook his head, wide eyes filled with confusion, even then the boy always needed to know everything.

Techno just chuckled, ruffling Tommy’s hair, “Of course you don’t. Wilbur is too busy dreaming about starting his own nation to teach you anything of importance.”

“Theseus was a prince, a hero, even. When he became an adult, he was sent to Athens. On the way there, he fought all ‘evil’, he was good. But when he reached Athens and fought the legendary Minotaur, it all went wrong.”

“He promised his dad, the king, that after defeating the minotaur he would hoist a white sail instead of the usual black, but he forgot his promise, and the sail remained the same,” Techno fell silent for a moment, rubbing his bandaged shoulder, “When his dad saw the black sail, he killed himself out of grief.”

Tommy winced, biting his lip. He would never let anything like this happen to Phil or Wilbur, they were too good, like Theseus.

“Theseus continued on with his quests, he extended his land and fought the Amazons, along with an uprising, but in the end, he was still killed, cast off a cliff.”

The boy’s icy blue eyes met red, tears threatening to spill.

“But he’s the good guy-” He cried, “Why would he be killed?”

“Now you’re getting it,” Techno chided, rubbing the boys back, “The good guys almost always end up dead or alone, due to protecting everyone but themselves. Despite all of the ‘good’ they do, they still end up in pain.”

A gust of wind blew past the two, making him shiver and lean into Techno’s chest. He didn’t want to be out anymore, he wanted to go home. He wanted to see Phil and Wilbur.

Techno sighed, letting a beat of silence pass before he finished.

“So tell me, Theseus, do you still want to be the good guy?”

Another crash sounded through the house, Tommy stood up suddenly, face hardening and readjusting the hold on his bow.

“I’m going to be the good guy, Fran,” He said, “No matter what it takes.”

And with that, he left the room.

George could barely focus, blood pooling on the ground beneath him, crimson staining his jeans, his head heavy and eyelids threatening to fall shut.

He almost considered letting them, too, the warm and inviting sleep almost being too tempting to pass up. But despite the fog in his head, he knew that if he did fall asleep, this time he wouldn’t

wake up.

Not because of a spell, but still because of Dream. How fitting.

But he couldn't let him win, not like this, not when Sam and Tommy were still in danger. He didn't care about what happened to him, he would jump in front of the explosion 10 more times if that's what it took to keep them safe.

He focused on the day he woke up, the state Tommy was in. Never had he wanted to see that tower again, but this time he made sure he remembered exactly how tall it was and how numb the boy's eyes were as he headed that way.

Dream hurt him, he hurt him over and over, and then as soon as they started healing, he came back and ripped the bandaid off, bringing up months of trauma in seconds.

He forced his eyes open.

Just in time to meet Dreams.

Fear coursed through his veins like ice, chilling him to the bone, but he refused to break. He inhaled sharply, breath wavering.

"What are you doing here, Dream?" He asked, biting his lip to keep from gasping when a particularly strong shot of pain shot through him. Sam stood between the two, his eyes flickering back to George to make sure he was okay.

Dream only laughed, throwing his mask to the side, allowing them to see his face. George knew what that meant, he didn't plan on letting any of them leave the house alive.

"What do you *think*, I'm doing here, Georgie?" He sneered, flashing Sam a look of disgust, green eyes gleaming with anger, "I should have known you'd come here, you've always had a weird attachment to... *him*."

George saw how Sam tensed, the grip on his sword looking painfully tight.

"Yeah, you should have known," George bit out, slowly rising from his place on the ground, knees shaking beneath his weight, "You should have known because Sam has always been a good friend, far better than you ever were."

"Oh, Georgie, that's just simply not true," Dream smirked, eyes shifting to something behind him, his head tilting as he grinned.

George's stomach dropped. Please god, no.

"Isn't that right, Tommy?"

Fuck.

George looked behind him, exhaling sharply when he saw Tommy, dread filling his chest. The boy had the drawstring of his bow pulled back, pointing directly at Dream, arms shaking.

Tommy shook his head, jaw clenching. He looked torn, between shooting Dream then and there and wanting to come to George's side. If there was one thing George wanted at that moment, it was to take him and run, hold him till he inevitably fell asleep against him, where he could protect him.

“Tommy and I had so much fun together,” Dream taunted, grabbing his crossbow and arming it, the disposition between that and his false cheer making George’s head spin, “I was so upset to find that you left.”

“Don’t you fucking talk to him,” Sam finally snapped, taking a step forward, “Don’t talk to either of them or I’ll- I’ll-”

“You’ll *what*, Sam?” Dream mocked, matching the step forward and shifting his attention solely onto him.

George wanted to scream or cry, but that wasn’t what was important right then. He let Sam and Dream’s arguing fall into the background as he made eye contact with Tommy, motioning him closer to him, which Tommy followed.

The boy dropped the bow, small snuffles resounding as he saw just how much blood George had lost.

He grabbed Tommy’s shirt, falling back to his knees as his adrenaline began to fade. The boy helped him to the ground, sharing a concerned glance with Sam when the older man turned, hearing the commotion behind him, when Dream suddenly hit the side of Sam’s head, his sword clattering to the ground.

“Tommy-” George whispered, fighting the wave of exhaustion that hit him, barely managing to keep his eyelids open. In the background, he heard Sam and Dream fight, Dream keeping the upper hand when he kicked Sam’s sword away. “Tommy,” He whispered again, pulling the blonde’s attention from the fight and towards him, meeting his red-rimmed eyes, “I need you to run- I need you to go to L’Manburg, find Niki or Quackity, tell them ‘chocolate croissants’, they’ll know what you mean.”

Tommy shook his head, still holding onto George like a lifeline, head snapping up when Dream made his way towards them, crossbow in hand and directing towards George, not stopping till the tip of the arrow was pressed flush against his skin. He looked for Sam, but the man was lying unconscious, blood on his temple.

“This wouldn’t have happened if you hadn’t betrayed me,” Dream said, voice as calm and collected as ever, like he wasn’t about to kill his longest friend. “You should have stayed asleep, Georgie.”

George closed his eyes, praying that Tommy would look away, that he wouldn’t have to see his life come to an end.

“No, Dream-” Tommy spoke anger lacing his voice like venom, making George peel his eyes open, just in time to see the boy pick up the arrow from his discarded bow and stab Dream in the shoulder, “-You should have stayed away.”

The crossbow clattered to the ground as Dream clutched his shoulder, gasping and cursing, the arrow lodged in between the small seam where his armor met, making it difficult for Dream to get it out.

Tommy stood up, eyes flickering between George and Sam, who looked to be just regaining consciousness from whatever Dream had done to him.

“Tommy, run!” George rushed, noticing how Dream was about to stand, grabbing his pant leg with as much strength as he could muster, “Get out of here!”

Dream tried to follow the boy, but between what little strength George had left, and Sam, who fully regained his consciousness and grabbed his sword, he didn't make it far.

George let go of him only when Sam got close, kicking the crossbow as far as possible, letting the blackness fade into his vision, content to let Sam handle the rest, now that Tommy was safe. Sam may not have been a 'PVP god' like Dream, but he knew that when it came to his family, Dream didn't stand a chance.

He fell unconscious, comforted by the knowledge that Tommy would be okay, head slamming against the stone floor.

Tommy ran, and he ran, and he kept running. His legs screamed and his lungs burned, but he kept running. It had been so long since George brought him to Sam's, he could barely remember how to get back, but he kept running anyway.

Tears fell freely when he began to cross the ice bridge, remembering how scared he was the last time he was there, and how George comforted him and kept him safe, even though they had barely talked to each other before that day.

By the time he reached the last portal, he was tired, sore, and his eyes burned from the tears he couldn't stop, but he kept going.

The second he stepped through the portal, the realization that he hadn't been back to L'Manburg for over a year hit him. Everything was different, so different. He stilled only for a second, desperately trying to remember where Niki's bakery was.

He ran into the community house, needing to find a map, or a sign, that could point him in the right direction. When he slammed the door open, Punz, who was shuffling through chests, froze, eyes widening as he took in the blonde, shaking his head like he thought it might be a hallucination.

"Tommy!" He yelled, the lid of the chest dropping with a bang as he ran to his side. Tommy hadn't looked at himself, but he knew he couldn't look good. "Holy shit, you're alive!"

"That's not important," The boy rushed out, grabbing his shoulders and looking deep into his eyes, trying to show just how pertinent this situation was, "I- I need help, Punz, Sam and George, they need help-" He couldn't continue, breaking into a fit of sobs.

Punz's eyebrows pinched, rubbing Tommy's shoulders, "Slow down, Tommy, okay? Everything is going to be okay," he said, unwittingly parroting Tommy's own words, "Tell me what's going on."

Tommy pulled away from him, trying to contain his cries, looking from door to door, trying to figure out which path led to the bakery. "Dream- he, he hurt them, Punz!" He cried, "I need to find Niki, please, do you know where her bakery is?"

Punz nodded, not talking any further, leading him out one of the doors and down a path. Every person they passed looked at Tommy like they were seeing a ghost, but when they tried to talk to them, he brushed past them, needing to find who he was looking for. George's life depended on it.

That was until he came face to face with Tubbo, who was stood laughing with Jack Manifold. He froze in his place, temporarily stunned by seeing his best friend again, the last time being when he was exiled.

Punz tried to get his attention, but he brushed him off, telling him to find Niki and Quackity,

relaying the message George told him, before running to Tubbo, barreling into him. Ignoring the guilt that flared when he did so.

“Tommy?” Tubbo gasped, briefly stepping back to get a good look at him before launching himself back into his arms, shaking, “You’re- you’re alive, I can’t- surely not-”

Tommy broke down fully then, crumbling in his best friend’s arms, Tubbo following suit. He knew he needed to catch up to Punz, but he couldn’t bring his legs to move, not right away.

“I have to go,” He whispered after a moment, voice breaking. He forced himself to pull away from Tubbo, even when his friend started shaking his head, fresh tears spilling, “I have to- I have to save them, I have to save my family.”

“What are you talking about?” Tubbo asked, desperately latching onto his arm, eyes pleading, “What family? Where were you?”

Tommy’s eyebrows furrowed, lips pulled into a frown. He would explain everything later, he wasted enough time as it was, “I’m sorry - I have to go,” He mumbled, barely audible, eyes lighting up as he got an idea, “Wait, do you still have all of those potions?”

Tubbo nodded, obviously confused but following Tommy regardless, leaving Jack behind.

“We need to hurry, he doesn’t have a lot of time.”

Sam held the sword flushed against Dream’s neck, teeth clenched so hard he wouldn’t be surprised if they shattered. The man beneath him looked pissed, and it fueled a sick sense of pride within him that he now had the upper hand.

“George,” He called, being careful as to not make the same mistake twice, only allowing his eyes to briefly flick towards him, not letting Dream find a way to overpower him again. His pounding head reminding of his past mistake. “George are you okay?”

“He’s not going to respond, Sammy-”

“Don’t call me that-” He sneered, “-only George can call me that.”

“Oh Sammy,” Dream laughed, completely ignoring what he said, staring him down, despite being below him. Sam forced his face into a neutral expression, refusing to show any fear. “Do you really think he’s going to wake up? I mean look at him...”

Sam stayed focused on Dream, refusing to move even slightly. He just had to wait till someone showed up, he heard George tell Tommy to go get help. He could wait that long. George could wait that long. He had to. There wasn’t any other option.

“Did he ever tell you about that?” He continued, bringing everything back to the forefront of Sam’s mind, “I had a house all set up for him, where he could rest, where he could stay safe. Now look at him, bleeding out, and all because of you.”

“Shut up,” Sam ground out, refusing to let Dream manipulate him, he had to stay strong. “The only time he’s ever been in danger is because of you. You treat everyone like pawns, it was only a matter of time before he tried to get away from you.”

Dream scoffed, pressing his neck closer against the blade, a bead of blood pooling on the edge of the weapon before dripping down the column of his throat, “So kill me then, Sam,” He chided,

grinning like a psychopath, “What’s stopping you? I’m the cause of everything bad, isn’t that right? So *kill me* .”

“That would be too easy,” Sam sneered, dragging the blade forward ever so slightly, barely slicing skin, “You fucked up the second you hurt my boys, and you’re going to spend the rest of your life paying for that.”

“ *Your* boys?” Dream laughed, not even wincing when the action jostled the blade, “You hide them away, out of reach from anyone else, and then think they like you when they start to get attached. It’s Stockholm syndrome, Sammy, they don’t care.”

“No-” He snapped, forcing himself to take a couple of deep breaths. He couldn’t lose his temper. “No, they know they were free to leave, they were just hiding from *you* . I would never hurt them, I love them!”

“Aww, you love them, how cute-”

Sam blocked out the rest of the sentence, instead, he thought about how as soon as Dream was locked up, he would do something for his family. Build something, or maybe take them for a trip. They deserved all the happiness in the world, they deserved so much better than the man in front of him.

But the urge to just kill him, then and there, then help George, it was stronger than anything he had faced before. Why should George lay there, bleeding out, while this fucking monster was allowed to be alive? It didn’t make any sense.

His fingers itched to make just one fatal swipe, ending his pathetic life. No one would miss him. It would almost be fitting, Sam being the one to take his life, considering he was the reason he left in the first place. He shook those thoughts away. Dream wouldn’t take another victim, he would get what was coming to him.

Sooner than he thought, he heard his name being called. Quackity, Niki, and Punz all ran into his home, eyes wide as they took in the sight of George lying, bleeding out, and Sam, holding a sword to Dream’s neck.

“Where’s Tommy?” Sam asked, not happy with the absence of the boy, his worry hitting him harder than he thought was possible, already anxious from not being able to help George.

“He’s with Tubbo,” Punz answered, grabbing his sword and coming to his side, raising it towards Dream, “They’ll be here shortly I’m sure.”

Sam nodded, letting out a breath he didn’t know he was holding, watching carefully as Quackity and Niki both ran to George, getting over their initial shock and inspecting his injuries.

“George-” Niki said softly, shaking his shoulder, trying to get a response. When nothing happened, she shared a look with Quackity that Sam didn’t miss, now being able to look away from Dream and not worry about being overpowered.

“What is it?” He asked, hands shaking so hard that the blade shook against Dream’s neck, trickles of blood now streaming down his throat. No one answered. He tightened his grip, breath shuddering in his chest, “Someone fucking tell me what’s going on!”

Quackity stood up, carefully coming to his side and grabbing the handle of the sword, Punz getting ready to strike if Dream tried anything, though he seemed like he had already given up, “Hand me the sword, you should go be with him, Sam.”

Sam couldn't think about what that implied, but he didn't need to be told twice, giving the sword to Quackity and rushing to George's side, falling to his knees. He noticed his skin was pale, more so than usual, lips tinted blue and chest still.

With trembling hands, he rubbed George's head, massaging his scalp like he had done for him and Tommy time and time again, tears spilling from his eyes. He made no attempt to stop them, letting the tears flow freely down his cheeks as he wept, Niki rubbing his back and murmuring soft words of comfort in his ears.

"Sam!"

His head snapped towards the door, making eye contact with Tommy, who took in the sight of Sam crying over George's body and froze, his eyes widening. He shouldn't have to see this, he's too young. He's lost too many people.

The boy suddenly shot forward, running to George and digging a small vial of glowing liquid from his pocket.

Sam helped Tommy tilt his head back and open his mouth, hope flickering in his chest, the boy opened up the vial and tipped it so the contents spilled down George's throat.

The house filled with silence, even Dream, as they waited to see if the vial brought him back, but as each minute passed, their dread grew. Tommy doubled over George with a cry, laying his head on his chest and clutching his shirt, sobbing freely.

"Please- please god, no!" The boy wept, chest heaving, "Not George, please!"

Sam tried to help, he tried to comfort him, but it didn't take him long to break too, silently begging for the universe to fix this, to take him instead. But nothing happened, George was still motionless.

He stood up, facing Dream with a new sense of anger, shaking from his unbridled rage. He saw red as he launched towards the man, a sickening crack sounding when his fist made contact with Dream's cheek.

"You fucking prick!" He yelled, hitting him again, this time in the throat. Dream fell to the ground, clutching his throat and coughing. He switched to kicking him, delivering blow after blow to his ribs as Dream tried to protect himself. Punz and Quackity shared a concerned look but didn't stop him. "He was perfect! God, this is all your fault!"

Eventually, he felt a gentle hand on his shoulder, pulling him away from Dream, he met Tubbo's teary eyes, his guilt hitting him like a train. He shouldn't have broken down in front of him and Tommy, they needed comfort, not anger.

"I'm so sorry, Tubbo," He cried, leaving Dream on the floor, and wrapping his trembling arms around the boy, who was crying himself but was clearly trying to stay strong, "I wanted to protect you boys, I - I'm so sorry."

Tommy let the rest of their conversation fade away, knowing that Sam was calming down let him focus back on George's limp body, his closed eyelids making him look almost peaceful. He would give anything to be asleep in his bed, George laying with him and telling him a story.

A fresh batch of tears made their way down his cheeks, pooling on George's blood-stained shirt, "Please come back to me, Gogs," He whispered, voice raw, "Please- I can't lose you, too."

He felt a gentle hand on his back, and he shook it off, "Go away, Niki," He hiccuped, closing his

eyes and remembering the last real conversation he had with him. When he told him to tell Sam how he felt.

Now he would never get to tell Sam how he felt, they were his family and now they would never be together again. He felt like he was going to faint. It was too late to save him. He was too late to be the hero. This was all his fault.

Maybe Technoblade was right, maybe being the good guy was a mistake. George had done nothing but help him, and Dream still hurt him. He didn't deserve this.

He was half tempted to stand up and finish what Sam started, but he didn't trust his legs to hold his weight. Another hand rubbed his back, and he swatted it off.

"Niki, stop-" He hissed, burrowing his head into George's still chest. He couldn't leave him.

That's when he realized. The chest he was laying on wasn't still. He froze, heart hammering in his chest as the hand began rubbing his back yet again.

"Now do I look like I'm Niki?"

Tommy gasped, shooting up, wrapping his arms around George's shoulders and pulling him towards him with so much force he lifted him off the ground and into a sitting position.

"George!" He cheered, fresh tears spilling as he hugged him.

As soon as Tommy yelled, everyone else in the room's eyes snapped towards them. Not even a second after, Sam launched towards them both, laughing incredulously as he wrapped his arms around them. Tommy didn't even care about everyone seeing him be sappy, far too relieved to think about it.

"What- How-" Sam stuttered, pulling back a small amount to look at George's abdomen, said man letting him pull his shirt up so they could inspect the wound, which was now healed with an ugly red scab but healed nonetheless.

Sam exhaled, dropping the shirt before hugging them again, "Tommy you're a fucking genius-" He laughed. George dropped his head against Sam's chest, breathing heavily but patting Tommy's shoulder, "You saved his life, Bud."

Tommy flushed from the praise, still in disbelief. "Tubbo was the one who had it, I- it was just a potion."

George shook his head, weekly smacking Tommy's arm, "Stop, don't discredit yourself. Potion or not, yours or not, you're still a good person."

You're still a good person.

Tommy once again thought about Techno's words. He was a good person. So was George. They might not have had it easy, and it may have been far closer to a call than he liked to think about, but George was alive. He was alive, Sam was alive.

Maybe Technoblade was wrong.

He curled into George's side, who leaned further into Sam, his head buried in George's neck.

"Please don't ever do that again," Tommy whispered, "I already lost one family, I can't lose you, too."

"I'm okay Tommy," George responded, voice rough and eyelids drooping, but smiling nonetheless, "I told you I wasn't ever going to leave you and I meant it."

"I hate to interrupt-" Quackity stepped forward, still eyeing the man wheezing on the ground, whose ribs were most likely broken, "But we need to get him locked away before he learns how to breathe again."

Sam nodded and began to stand, but both Punz and Niki shook their heads, "Don't worry about it Sam," She said, "We'll make sure he's taken care of, you stay here, with them."

Sam sighed, rubbing a hand over his face before pulling George back into his side, "I'm trusting you, don't mess it up."

"Yes sir." Punz joked, making Sam roll his eyes and George snort.

"I forgot you were the warden," George mumbled, swaying as he tried, and failed, to sit up straight. "It's hot."

Tommy doubled over with laughter, only increasing when he saw how red Sam's cheeks flushed.

"I think you need to rest, George," Sam said, struggling to find his words, "You're clearly out of it." George only shrugged, mumbling about how he wasn't wrong, when Sam picked him up and stood, "Tommy, I think you need to talk to someone."

Tommy looked to where Sam motioned, where Tubbo was standing by the crater of a doorway, watching Punz drag Dream out, biting his nails. He didn't want to leave George, but he knew he would have to.

He couldn't help but worry about what Tubbo had to say. It had been so long since they had a real conversation, he wasn't sure how to approach him, or how to begin to explain everything that happened in the past year.

He slowly made his way to Tubbo, biting his lip as his stomach twisted, half-considering just turning back.

"Hey..." He greeted, brushing his hands over his dirt-covered jeans like it would somehow help him look more put together. Tubbo gave him a weak smile, before Tommy's stomach dropped, "Oh shit- Fran!"

"Fran?" Tubbo questioned, but Tommy was already running further into the home, kicking himself for forgetting about the dog, who was probably terrified. After a moment, Tubbo followed him.

The second Tommy opened the door Fran tackled him with kisses, tail wagging and rubbing her head against him. He didn't mind, he was just glad she was okay.

"Tubbo this is Fran," He introduced, smiling brightly as Tubbo let the dog smell his hand, "She's the best."

"Hi Fran," Tubbo cooed, kneeling by her side, petting behind her ears, "Aww what a good girl." Tommy sat down next to him, joining him in petting her.

An awkward silence fell between them, neither quite sure where to start. The breaking point for Tommy was the slight sniffle from his friend, reminding him that he did eventually have to explain what happened.

He shifted to Tubbo's side, patting his back awkwardly as he tried to channel George and Sam, as they always knew what to do and say. He wished they stayed back with him and helped him with this, but he understood why they left. This was a conversation he needed to have by himself.

"It's okay Tubbo," He soothed, rubbing his friends back as he cried heavier, "I'm okay."

"I just, I don't understand-" His friend stuttered, "How? I *grieved* you, I made a memorial, Tommy, how - how can you be alive?!"

Tommy frowned, pulling his knees to his chest and setting his head on his knees, "You really thought I was dead?" The thought made him shiver, he couldn't help but wonder if Phil and Techno knew he was alive, or if they grieved him, too. Though he doubted it, it's not like they cared when Wilbur died.

"I went to go get you, to bring you back from exile... I realized I made a mistake, and I tried to fix it, but- but when I got there, everything was in ruins, and there was a tower, I didn't know what to think."

Tommy swallowed thickly, hands shaking. He looked to the piano, then to the kitchen, where dust-covered boxes of chocolate croissants laid, then finally landing back on Tubbo, who refused to meet his gaze.

"I'm really sorry, Tubbo," Tommy said earnestly, leaning back on his hands, "I was so preoccupied staying hidden from Dream that I didn't even think about what everyone else would think."

Tubbo huffed, giving him a suspicious side-eye, "What is wrong with you? You just apologized, what the hell?" Both teens laughed, realizing just how strange their situation was, before Tubbo continued, "You don't have to be sorry, Tommy," he mumbled, a small smile settling on his lips, "I'm just glad you're okay."

"Thank Sam and George for that one," He continued, "George is the one who rescued me from exile, he stopped me from uh... you know," Tubbo nodded solemnly, "Sam took us in and kept us safe, I don't know what would have happened if he didn't"

"They're your family," Tubbo muttered, the realization finally hitting him, before a mischievous smile pulled his lips, "So have they sucked face yet?"

Tommy's mouth dropped open, eyes widening, "Tubbo!" He sputtered, expression curling into one of disgust, "That's so gross, they're basically my dads at this point!"

His friend only laughed, closing his eyes and smooching the air, making Tommy groan and shove his shoulder.

"Look I'm just saying! They're definitely kissing each other right now!"

George sat on the edge of his bed, shirt discarded and shivering. He was so tired, exhausted from the rollercoaster they had all been put through. He sat still, as every time he moved a sharp pain shot through his side.

He couldn't complain though, not when Sam walked back into the room, carrying a damp washcloth and bowl of water. As much pain as he was in, it didn't begin to compare to the relief he was feeling.

Dream was in prison, he could never hurt anyone ever again. Tommy was alive, Sam was alive, he

was alive. Everything was okay. He felt like he was taking his first breath in months, just realizing that he no longer had to be in survival mode, he wasn't in danger.

He almost felt high from the feeling, giddy, riding out the feeling.

But when you come out of survival mode, the brain starts to remember the things it was repressing, the things it was ignoring in order to save you more pain.

It didn't help to see Tommy and Tubbo together, as happy as he was they were finally reunited, and he was happy, but it reminded him of his best friend, who he had no idea where he was.

For all he knew, Sapnap was dead, potentially killed by Dream. He knew that Sapnap was stubborn, far too bull-headed for his own good, and he wouldn't be surprised if he lashed out at Dream if he found out what he did to him. All he could do was hope for the best, and look for him as soon as he was completely healed.

He winced as he felt cold touch his side, breathing heavily when a sharp pain shot through his chest.

"Sorry, I know it's cold-" Sam apologized, dipping the rag back into the bowl, kneeling in front of George, "-but I need to make sure it's healed and won't get infected."

George nodded, stomach tensing as Sam wiped some of the dirt away from his bruised skin.

"Do you want to talk about it?" He asked, eyes flicking up to George's. George shook his head, hands fiddling with the sheets on both sides of him, making Sam frown, "You came back from the dead George," He said, rubbing the back of his hand with the one that wasn't holding the rag, "It's okay to be upset."

George sighed, stomach twisting, though this time not from the pain, "I- I don't really remember, honestly. The last thing I remember was Tommy running, going to get help, while you were on the ground, I- It gets fuzzy after that." Sam nodded, egging him to continue, "It was like I blinked, one second everything faded to black, then the next I was laying on the ground, god it was so cold, and Tommy was crying above me, he was shaking."

He didn't know he was crying till Sam leaned up and wiped his thumb over his cheek, his own eyes glassy, "I'm so glad you're okay, George," He whispered, eyes briefly flickering to his lips. George swallowed. "I don't know what I would have done without you."

He didn't think twice, too caught up in his emotions, common sense drowned out by how enraptured he was with Sam, how gentle he was with him. He moved forward, briefly pausing when he felt Sam's breath against his skin, eyes fluttering closed.

A hand wrapped around George's back, another gently grasping the back of his neck, thumb barely grazing his cheek, but pulling him closer.

George sighed softly, leaning in and closing the rest of the distance between them. Sam's lips were soft, gentle, patient, just like him. The hand wrapped around him pulled him closer, pulling him flush against Sam's chest.

He gasped slightly when Sam lightly bit his bottom lip, then ran his tongue over it. It was almost possessive, the way Sam was holding him, kissing him like it was their last days alive. Gone with the gentleness, passion took its place. Months of built-up feelings and emotions showing in the way their lips became sloppier, messier, needier.

Being there, against Sam, his lips against his, George swore he could feel every ounce of emotion they had been repressing, and he knew he should have done this ages ago.

He pulled away, needing to catch his breath, laying his forehead against Sam's chest, breathing heavy. He didn't need to look in a mirror to know how red he was, but he didn't care. Not when Sam's hands were still rubbing his back and he was placing feather-light kisses to the top of his head.

Eventually, he looked back up, smiling when he met Sam's eyes, feeling the lightest he had ever felt. Sam rubbed his bottom lip with his thumb, fondness filling his eyes, before pulling him into another kiss, this one much shorter, but filled with just as much love, if not more.

"You have no idea how long I've wanted to do that," Sam admitted. George smiled, warmth blossoming in his chest, stronger than ever before. "I wasn't sure how much longer I could stop myself."

"I don't want you to stop yourself," George replied, interlocking his fingers with Sam's, "I've wanted this too."

Sam's eyebrows raised, and his head tilted, "You do?"

"I do..." George responded, "Tommy was the one to make me see it if you could believe that."

Sam snorted, rolling his eyes, "Of course he did," He smiled, "Kid can't mind his own business, I swear."

"Thank god for that," George matched his smile, dropping Sam's hands, noticing how empty his hands felt without his, standing up, "He's too good for his own good."

"He is," Sam agreed, ignoring George's discarded shirt to pick up one of his own, handing it to him, "So are you. That's the reason I fell in love with you."

George paused briefly, before taking the shirt, which was much bigger than any of his own, sliding it over his head. "Love?" He asked, carefully meeting Sam's eyes.

Sam held out his hands, smiling when George took them, pulling him back into his embrace.

"Love."

George didn't answer, instead leaning up to kiss Sam yet again, hoping it would be enough. He loved Sam, he knew he did, but he had never been great at telling people how he felt about them. He wasn't afraid though, he knew Sam wouldn't rush him or pressure him, he would always be there for him.

Still, he couldn't be completely happy until his family was complete. He had Sam, he had Tommy, soon he would have Tubbo. But he didn't have his best friend. He wouldn't be complete until he knew where he was, no matter the outcome.

He pulled away from him. "Will you take me to the SMP?" He asked, wincing when Sam's face fell, "No- not because I want to leave, I- I want to stay here, with you, that is if you want, I know we haven't really talked about what would happen when Dream was caught-"

"George-" He bit his lip, swallowing down his embarrassment as Sam interrupted his spiral, "I want you here, you and Tommy, and Tubbo too, he needs a family." George nodded, "But yes, of course, I'll take you to the SMP, I'm sure you and Tommy both want to see everyone."

“About that,” George said, “Did you ever see Sapnap when you were going back and forth?”

Sam froze. George could see in the way that he was hesitant to answer that he hadn’t. His stomach twisted. “I need to find him,” he mumbled, wincing when his voice broke, “I don’t want to leave you guys, you’re my family, but so is he, and I need to make sure he’s okay.”

“We’ll help you, George,” Sam replied, “Dream is locked up, if he knows where Sapnap is, it’s only a matter of time before he breaks and tells us.”

George nodded, before smiling mischievously, “I was being honest, you know?” Sam’s eyebrow raised, “You are hot when you’re being all warden-y.”

Sam scoffed, leaning close to his ear, so close he could feel Sam’s lips brush against his cartilage, “I’m always hot, George,” He said smoothly, voice dropping an octave, making him whimper.

He cleared his throat, stepping away from Sam to try to regain his composure, glaring when he laughed, “You wish.” He said stubbornly, before looking to the door, “Do you think they’re done talking yet?”

“I don’t know, they both have a lot to say, and you know how Tommy can shut down.”

George raised a hand to his mouth, chewing on his nails, “Should we go out there? Make sure they’re okay?”

Sam walked forward, opening the door for him, as George walked through he heard him call him a ‘mother hen’, and he flipped him off over his shoulder. Someone had to be a mother hen, and he was happy to fill the role.

They both stopped when they saw the two boys, laughing next to Fran, who was wagging her tail. George took a second to take a mental image of the sight, wanting to remember this for the rest of his life.

Eventually, Tommy looked over his shoulder, smiling brightly when he saw the two, Tubbo following suit, though it was clear he was more hesitant.

Sam brushed past him, taking a second to whisper in his ear. George smiled, staying still as he walked forward, sitting next to the two boys and ruffling their hair.

“I love you, too,” George whispered, just under his breath. He went to the kitchen first, brushing off the dust from the top of one of the boxes, and headed back to the boys. “Anyone want a chocolate croissant?”

Chapter End Notes

only one more chapter, but just so y'all know, I am open to continuing this as more inspo comes in. so if you have any ideas for family scenes that you want to see, comment and lmk !

i rewrote this a thousand times, so I hope this version is something you all like

thank u for all the love and support, I love seeing all the comments you guys leave. it's a v sweet online family in here <3

Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

bonding

Chapter Notes

holy shit, we're at the end

hope you're ready ;)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

George slowly peeled his eyelids open, blinking the sleep from his eyes and taking in the room he was in.

Warm rays of sunlight peered into the room, casting the room and its contents in a golden light. He yawned, stretching his arms above his head, wincing at the pops of his back. He twisted beneath the heavy comforter, smiling softly.

In front of him, still sound asleep with his arm draped across George's side, was Sam, his hair messy and mumbling incoherently.

He tried to get out of bed, but as soon as he started moving, the arm on his side pulled him closer, till his head was nuzzled against Sam's chest.

George huffed, rolling his eyes and trying to pry Sam's arm off of him, but it was times like this he remembered just how strong his boyfriend was, keeping him in place, even in his sleep.

After a moment of trying to escape Sam's grasp, he gave up, resigning to stay in bed, for just a minute longer. The comforting grasp of sleep lulled George towards it, his eyelids falling shut. He didn't try to fight it, not now, not when he was quite literally in Sam's arms. He had never felt safer in his life, completely and utterly protected by him.

It had been almost a week since Dream was captured, and he had never felt better. Sapnap's absence was still weighing heavily on his mind, but Sam and Quackity assured him they were doing their best to find him. He just had to be patient.

Dream being locked up had an obvious effect on everyone, he noticed. Tommy and Tubbo were always out exploring, the latter giving up his presidency to enjoy what was left of his childhood.

Sam still stayed by his side, almost constantly, but that's just how he was. Only now, he was dragging him out of the house at random times of the day, wanting to show off his projects or get fresh air. Not that he minded of course, he liked seeing Sam excited.

Tommy still had nightmares, but when that happened he just climbed into bed with him and Sam, glaring at Sam whenever he tried to pull George closer. Tommy loved Sam, he knew that, but no

matter what happened he knew the blonde would always be attached to him, and by proxy, protective.

He couldn't complain, though, he was the same way.

Tubbo was in the process of moving into their home, the last couple boxes being brought out later that day. George was a little nervous about it if he was being honest. He had never really spoken to Tubbo, he was worried that it would be awkward, especially since he was so used to mothering Tommy.

That was the other part that scared him. He hadn't been used to having a family before Sam and Tommy, not a real one anyway. He was already constantly worrying over the two, and he knew as soon as he started to get to know Tubbo better he would feel the need to protect him, too.

He felt Sam's arm shift around him, his breathing changing, a sure sign he was waking up. George looked back up to his face, taking in his slight freckles and stubble, waiting for him to wake up further.

"G'morning," Sam whispered, sleep still clouding his voice, before kissing George's forehead, pulling him impossibly closer, "How long have you been awake?"

George melted further into touch, chest warming at the domesticity of waking up with his boyfriend, "Not long," He replied, fingers fiddling with Sam's shirt, "I was just thinking."

"Thinking 'bout what," Sam frowned, reaching down and interlocking his fingers with his own. George sighed, laying his head flat against his chest, searching for his heartbeat out of instinct.

"I dunno," He didn't need to see Sam's face to know he didn't believe him, he chewed on his lip, "Tubbo's coming today... for good." He felt Sam nod against him, "I'm worried."

Sam dropped his hands, lightly grabbing George's jaw and tilting his head up to look at him, eyebrows furrowed. "Worried about what, George? Everything is fine."

"I know, I know," He sighed, "It's just... What if he hates it here with us? What if I can't keep both him and Tommy safe and happy?"

"Oh I see, you're just being a mother hen, got it."

George hit his chest with a huff, glaring at his boyfriend, though he couldn't exactly argue. He may be worrying too much, but that didn't make his concerns any less valid.

"Look," Sam said seriously, "It'll be an adjustment, just like when you and Tommy came here in the first place, but look where that led," He motioned at the two of them, George draped over his chest, legs intertwined, "Dream is in prison, okay? And it's not just you, I'm here, too." George bit his lip, feeling the familiar burn of tears sting his eyes. He willed them away. "We're safe, okay? We're safe."

George's side itched, the fresh scar calling for his attention. He didn't like to admit it, but even with Dream locked away, he still worried. It was selfish, because as much as he did worry about his family being hurt, he was most afraid of dying again.

Sam had tried to talk to him a little bit about his experience, but every time he started, George shut him down. He told himself it was to keep Sam from worrying, but he knew the truth.

He was afraid of putting Tommy and Sam through more, of course. But most of all he was afraid of

leaving, of not being able to be there for the people he cared about. Asleep, in a coma, dead.

He shivered at the thought.

He pinched his side.

He was awake.

Everyone was safe.

George breathed in deeply, attempting to quell his anxiety. Today was just like any other day. If he believed it, it would come true, the law of attraction and all that.

“Are you calming down, love?”

George pulled a face at the name, but he nodded regardless. His relationship with Sam was still fresh, they would take some time to get used to the new aspect in their relationship, even with how close they were before.

Sam kissed his forehead one more time before pulling away. “Good, now let's go make breakfast and kidnap another teenager.”

George snorted, smiling despite his worries, and slowly stood from the bed, Sam's oversized shirt hanging off of him.

“Have I ever told you how pretty you are?” Came Sam's voice from the other side of the bed. He turned to see his boyfriend staring at him, a soft smile on his lips, “Because you are, very pretty.”

He rolled his eyes, throwing a pillow at the man, but it didn't stop the flush in his cheeks or the way his stomach fluttered. He was quickly learning that Sam's love language wasn't just physical affection as he had thought.

“Sap.”

Sam only laughed, throwing him a baggy pair of sweatpants, despite George's being closer. He didn't mention it. He liked feeling protected, since Dream had broken in Sam had grown to be more possessive, but he found that he didn't mind.

It wasn't the same suffocating ownership that Dream had tried to force onto him, this was built off of love and mutual respect.

He slipped on the sweatpants, tying the drawstring ridiculously tight, though it still hung low, and made his way to the kitchen, while Sam went to shower.

It wasn't long till Tommy was up, Fran padding in behind him. “G'morning Gogs,” He yawned, “What are you making?”

George looked at the supplies they had, before turning back to the teenager. “Pancakes?” He asked, laughing when Tommy nodded vigorously, “Come help me make them.”

“Do you remember the method?” He asked, grabbing a mixing bowl and the flour, then the eggs and milk, setting them in front of Tommy, who groaned. ‘3-2-1 method, c'mon, you know what to do.’

“If I had known you were going to make me cook I would have stayed in bed,” Tommy huffed, rolling up his sleeves regardless, “300ml of milk, 2 eggs, 100 grams of flour, right?”

George nodded, letting him handle the base of the pancakes while he worked on toppings, “Do you want lemon or chocolate, Tommy?” He asked although he knew the answer, and he set the lemon aside as he worked on the chocolate spread first.

“What are we doing today?” Tommy asked, stealing a couple of chocolate chips as George poured them into a mixing bowl. “Wait, isn’t Tubbo bringing the last of his stuff later?”

He smacked away Tommy's hands when he reached for more chocolate, though when he turned around to pour the milk into a saucepan, he knew that he was probably stealing more.

“Yeah, he is,” He responded, glaring at the blonde when he noticed the melted chocolate on his fingers and lips, “If you eat it all now there won’t be any for the pancakes,” Tommy shrugged, licking his fingers, making George groan, “You better wash your hands before you start, Tomothy.”

“Yes, mum.” he shot back. George sighed, half considering smacking him, but before he could make that decision, Sam walked in from his, from *their* , room, ruffling Tommy’s hair and asking how he slept.

“Do you think we should set some aside for Tubbo?” Tommy asked, his foot tapping against the ground. George and Sam shared a look.

He poured the warm milk from the saucepan and into the bowl, gently folding in the chocolate, “I don’t think he’ll be here till later,” he answered, cringing at how uneven Tommy’s measurements were, “That reminds me, though, I wanted to talk to you about him moving in.”

Sam raised an eyebrow, moving behind George and wrapping his arms around his waist, “Are you still in mama-bird mode?” He teased, “I thought we were past this.”

Tommy frowned, “What do you mean?” He put some butter in the skillet, looking back and forth between the melting butter and them, “Is there something wrong with Tubbo living with us?”

“No, no, no,” George replied quickly, “Nothing’s wrong, I just want to make sure you’re okay with all of this.”

“I’m completely fine with him moving in, Gogs,” Tommy answered, cursing as the first pancake broke when he tried to flip it, “I’ll finally have someone to hang out with besides you two simps.”

George sputtered, but with how Sam was literally holding him, he knew he couldn’t argue.

A knock sounded from their front door, the large sliding stone wall replaced by two oak. It had taken a while to clean up all of the debris, but they weren’t alone, as Niki and Quackity came to help.

George smiled fondly at the thought of the two, quickly considering them to be his best friends. He liked to think that if Dream had never interfered, they would have become close a long time ago. That didn’t matter though. They may have been late becoming friends, but they still were, and that’s what counted.

Speaking of which, Quackity opened the door and stepped through, smiling brightly. George forced an annoyed expression on his face, but it only made him smile harder. He moved through the house like it was his own. George liked how comfortable he felt around them.

“Good morning, bitches!” Quackity greeted, high-fiving Tommy when he got closer, “I come bearing good news, but only if you feed me.”

“Of course big Q!” Sam agreed easily, finally releasing George to set the table, “You know you’re always welcome here.”

“No you’re not,” George argued, grabbing the lemon from earlier to juice it, “I don’t ever want you here.”

“Fuck you, George.” Quackity pouted for a moment, before breaking out into a fit of laughter, one that George couldn’t help but join in on. “I guess you don’t want to hear my news.”

Tommy placed a plate of pancakes on the counter, eyeing Quackity carefully, “Are you pregnant?”

Both George and Sam lost it at that, Quackity glaring at the teenager. “And here I thought we were friends, Tommy,” He huffed, cheeks red, “Fine, be that way.” Tommy only shrugged, clearly proud of himself. “The news is that we finally heard from Sapnap.”

George shut up immediately, his eyes snapping to meet Quackity’s, mouth parted. He could feel both Sam and Tommy staring at him, but he didn’t care.

“Is he okay?” He croaked, “Where is he?”

“He’s been with Karl,” Quackity explained, “Hannah ran into them while traveling, she sent a letter. They’re on their way back.”

George inhaled sharply. Sapnap was okay, not only was okay, but he was on his way back. He was relieved, he really was, but he couldn’t help the nerves that came with that relief.

He wondered what Sapnap would say about Dream, he wanted to know where he’s been, and most of all he worried about what Sapnap would think about Sam, Tommy, and Tubbo. He was friends with Sam too, back in the day, but after he left, it was clear Sapnap would choose Dream over anyone. He worried that he would be mad at him for what happened.

“George?” Tommy was by his side now, a gentle hand on his wrist, “Are you okay?”

“I’m fine, Tomoathy, let’s just eat, yeah?”

He ignored the concerned glances, bringing the chocolate, the lemon, and the plate of pancakes to the table, everyone taking their usual seats.

“You didn’t poison these right, Tommy?” Quackity joked, pretending to inspect the pancake while Tommy cursed him out. “If I die, I’m haunting your ass.”

George chewed his lip, fiddling with the hem of his sweater. Tubbo was slowly putting his things away, getting easily distracted by Fran and Tommy, who were equally excited to have someone new in the home.

“Relax, darling.” George glared at his boyfriend, who wrapped his arms around his waist, whispering in his ear, “Everything is fine.”

“I know, I know,” he relaxed further into Sam, smiling when Tubbo looked over to them briefly, “This is real now, no going back.”

Sam’s fingers rubbed circles into his side, “Do you want to go back?” He asked, burrowing his head into the crook of his neck.

“No.” George replied earnestly, exhaling sharply, “No, I don’t.”

He pulled away, offering his help to Tubbo to put away the last two boxes. It was clear from the wide eyes and bitten lips that the boy was just as nervous as he was. George gave him a small smile, patting his back awkwardly to try to ease his anxiety. He didn’t want to make Tubbo more nervous than he was already.

It didn’t take long for everything to be put away, the empty boxes littering the hall.

“Reminds me of how I met Phil,” Tubbo quipped, kicking the cardboard. Tommy busted out laughing, but both George’s and Sam’s mouths dropped. “Relax, guys, I don’t actually remember, I was too young.”

Sam snorted, shaking his head. George fought the urge to hug him. “Well, either way, Tubbo, welcome home.”

“Are you sure you want to do this Tommy?”

Tommy inhaled sharply, looking back from the portal in the entrance of the prison to George, who was standing behind him, nervous about Tommy’s desire to confront Dream.

“I don’t *want* to do this, but I need to.” He replied, his own nerves increasing with each second in the building. He knew that once he entered that actual prison it would only be worse. “Besides, dad will be in there, and you know he’ll be just waiting for an opportunity to hurt the green bitch.”

George snorted, hugging him tightly, “I’ll be waiting out here, okay?” Tommy nodded, returning the hug, “Afterwards we’ll go get some pastries or something.”

“Chocolate croissants?”

“Chocolate croissants.”

Tommy chuckled lightly, still holding onto George, his heart racing. He understood why George wasn’t coming in, and with Sam, he knew he wouldn’t be alone, but he still wished that he would come in with him.

“I think your dad is waiting for you,” George whispered, though he didn’t let go. Tommy had been slipping up more and more, calling Sam dad and George mum. It started as him teasing, but it stuck. George secretly loved it.

“Are you sure he won’t be able to touch me?” Tommy asked, finally pulling away, staring the swirling purple down.

“I have no doubts that Sam won’t let him near you,” George replied, “You’ll be fine, I promise.”

Tommy nodded, swallowing thickly, taking one small step forward. “Thank you, George,” He said, “For everything, for uh, for rescuing me, for staying with me, for being an annoying helicopter mom,” George chuckled, “If you tell anyone I told you this I’ll kill you, but I love you.”

“Aww, Tomothy,” Tommy groaned, already regretting opening up, his cheeks burning hot, “I love you, too.” George patted his shoulder one last time, “I think it’s time. You’ll go through the portal, wait ten seconds, then go back through. Your dad will be waiting for you.”

He stepped forward, taking one last deep breath before stepping into the swirling purple. He waved

one last time to George before rematerializing in the second room.

“One, two, three,” he counted, his eyes closing, breath shuddering, “Four, five, six,” He suddenly regretted his decision, he just wanted to go home and be with his family, fuck Dream, “Seven, eight, nine,” He took a deep breath, opening his eyes and stepping through the portal yet again, “Ten.”

The next time he materialized, he was met with Sam’s worried expression. He was wearing his mask, and it was clear he was trying to hide his emotions, being the warden and all, but Tommy could read him better than that.

“Are you ready, bud?” Sam asked, his kind voice juxtaposing his intimidating uniform, “There’s no harm in turning back.”

Tommy shook his head, eyes flicking around the large room, before settling back on Sam, “I’m good, big man. Let’s just get this over with.”

They made their way through the intricate prison, eventually reaching a room with a wall of flowing lava.

“Step on the designated spot,” Sam directed, “Eyes forward.”

“Are you going to come with me?” Tommy asked, chewing his thumb as he waited for the lava to fall, the heat making sweat stick on the collar of his shirt.

“Do you want me to?”

Tommy inhaled, head tilting back to Sam, who was leaning against the wall next to a set of levers. He was grateful he was on his good side, as he looked terrifying right then. He couldn’t believe this man was the same that made him food and held him when he was down.

“I don’t know.” He finally replied, eyes flicking back to the lava, “Do you promise to stay close?”

“I’ll be right here, Toms,” Sam said, his voice calm as ever, soothing some of his anxiety, “All you’ll have to do is call for me and I’ll bring you back here.”

He nodded. He had told him this multiple times, but the reassurance felt good. “George wants to go get pastries after.” The lava was almost halfway down, he needed to think about something else, “He’s nervous, went all mother hen and shit on me.”

Sam chuckled slightly, “Yeah, I don’t doubt that,” He replied, “He worries about you and Tubbo a lot.”

His retort died on his lips, as the lava fell just enough for him to see the top of Dream’s head. It was hard to tell from the distance, but the prisoner turned to face them, to see who was coming, smirking when he saw Tommy.

He swallowed down the bile from his throat. He was strong, he could do this.

“You’re doing a brave thing, Toms,” Sam continued, his voice grounding him, “Say what you feel, don’t let him talk over you. You can leave at any time.”

Tommy’s arms trembled, but he kept his eyes forward. He couldn’t show weakness.

“I’m proud of you, Tommy.” Sam kept talking, clearly trying to help him relax, “I’m so glad you,

George, and Tubbo came into my life.”

“Sap,” Tommy whispered, though from Sam’s chuckle he knew he heard him. “You’re just as bad as mum.”

The lava was almost down. Tommy looked back to Sam, who was ready to pull the next lever.

“No one is as bad as your mom,” he replied, motioning for Tommy to look back forward, which he did, “Now I’m going to pull a lever, and the platform beneath you is going to move you forward. There’s a wall separating you, you won’t have to worry about him hurting you, okay?”

“Okay.”

Sam pulled the lever, the platform moving forward. Dream stared him down, the grin on his face making Tommy’s stomach churn.

He took in a deep breath. He was going to be fine. Sam was right across the gap, and George was just outside. He was safe. He was safe, and he was okay. He repeated that like a mantra, searching desperately for the confidence to face Dream.

The platform reached the cell, and he stepped off.

The silence that filled the room was almost unbearable. The look Dream gave him resembled a predator looking at prey, ready and waiting to strike.

“Hello, Tommy.” Dream finally spoke, leaning against the wall, staring him down. “I was wondering when I’d get a visitor, though I was expecting George.”

Tommy sneered at his mention of George. He didn’t like the way Dream said his name, he didn’t have the right.

“Dream.” He said curtly, “Why the hell would George want to see you? He’s moved on, he doesn’t care about you.”

“Unlike you, apparently,” Dream shot back, “Why are you here, Tommy? I thought I was irredeemable, the bad guy, the big bad villain of the SMP. So why are you here?”

He swallowed, breaking eye contact to look back at Sam, who was watching them intently. “I don’t care about you,” He said slowly, enunciating his words, “I just need to know why.”

“Why what?”

“Why did you make Tubbo exile me? Why did you make George sleep? Why did you have to hurt everyone?”

Dream looked past him, to where he knew Sam was, a sour expression filling his face.

“Before you, Wilbur and Sam came around I was in control, Tommy. It was almost fixed when he left, but of course, he had to come back.” Dream pushed himself from the wall, walking to the edge of his bed and sitting, “Everything would have been fine, had you and your annoying older brother not started L’Manburg.”

Tommy winced at the mention of Wilbur, pushing those memories aside. “So you did all of this for what? For power?”

Dream sighed, looking back to Tommy. He could see the bags below his eyes, and the way his face

looked more sunken in.

“George used to look at me like I was the most important thing in this world.” Tommy glared, willing him to shut up. He hated hearing about their old relationship, or whatever it was. “He would have killed and died for me. He loved me.”

“You hurt him,” Tommy spat, “You talk about him like he was property, Sam actually loves him.”

Dream scoffed, looking up at the ceiling. Tommy had never seen him this dejected before, it was off-putting.

“How did putting me in exile give you power?” He asked after a second, anger building up in his chest, hot tears threatening to spill. He forced them back, he could cry later. He wouldn’t give Dream the satisfaction of seeing him break.

“It didn’t really,” Dream answered, “But god it was fun. I would do it all again, but this time I would put you in a pit with all your armor and tools.”

Tommy’s breath shuddered. He snapped his head back to Sam, reminding himself that Dream couldn’t hurt him.

“You’re despicable,” He bit out, “You should have been locked away a long time ago.”

Dream rolled his eyes. Tommy kept going.

“It’s fitting that you ended up here, locked away by the same person George fell in love with.” Tommy’s skin tingled, his face hot, “You aren’t even half the man Sam is,” He felt a sick satisfaction course through him when Dream’s lip curled, “We’re a family now. And all you are and ever will be is alone.”

Dream lurched forward, Tommy recoiled, almost falling off of the ledge. He faintly heard Sam call for him, but his thundering heart made it difficult to focus on anything else.

Dream looked murderous, leaning as close to the gap in the wall as possible, hands clawing at the netherite blocks. Tommy hoped to god they would keep him back.

He heard the platform returning, almost crying in relief. He forced his eyes to meet Dream’s. “Enjoy your solitude and raw potatoes.” He muttered, melting into Sam’s hold, who pulled him back onto the platform, burying his face into his chest.

They made their way back to the front in silence, Sam’s arm wrapped around his shoulder.

As awful as it was, he had to admit, he felt lighter. He faced his demons, he never had to see him again.

He went through the first portal, barely standing up straight, his adrenaline crashing rapidly.

“One, two, three,” He whispered, eyelids heavy, “Four, five, six,” He just wanted to hug George. Sam was his dad, and he loved him, but he just wanted to see George right now. He had been with him from the very beginning, “Seven, eight, night,” A stray tear fell down his cheek, he wiped it away. “Ten.”

When he materialized again was George pacing, Tubbo leaning against the wall and watching the portal closely.

Both of their heads snapped towards him, he didn't think, immediately running to hug George, his tears flowing freely.

"Shhh," George soothed, rubbing his hand over his back, he felt Tubbo hug them too, and he bit back the urge to call him clingy.

"It's over now," George continued, readjusting to hold both of the boys, "It's over, you're okay."

The smell of Niki's bakery was always comforting. George hadn't gone in much before everything, but now that he was able, he loved it.

She smiled brightly when the group walked in, already packing them a box of pastries, knowing their favorites by heart. George leaned over the counter to give her a slight hug.

They pulled out the seats of a table, Tubbo and Tommy on one side and Sam and him on the other. He rested his hand on Sam's thigh, sharing a small smile. He had been so worried while they were in the prison, and he knew that something happened, but he would wait for someone to tell him. Right now, he just wanted to relax with his family.

"Have you guys really not tried it?" Tubbo asked, George raised his eyebrows, focusing back on the conversation. "It's so good, you have to!"

"Try what?" He asked, frowning when Tubbo stood, "Where are you going?"

"Dipping the croissants in hot chocolate!" He explained, giggling as he went to the counter. George groaned, thinking about the sugar rush that was sure to make the two already energetic teenagers even more excited.

Though from how Tommy's head hadn't left his hands, he wasn't sure he was feeling too lively.

"How are you feeling, Toms?" Sam asked, also noticing the blonde's position, "I know that was a lot to handle." George frowned, wanting to know what happened.

Tommy looked up, eyes drooping, "M fine," he mumbled, "Just tired."

Tubbo returned with four mugs of hot chocolate, spilling some on the table, which he giggled at, "Prepare to have your minds blown," he joked. George smiled, grabbing a napkin to wipe the table with.

"You're going to go into a chocolate-induced coma," He teased, watching in disgust as Tubbo poured even more chocolate syrup over the whipped cream. "How can you eat that?"

Tubbo shrugged, smiling brightly. "I dunno... I like chocolate!"

"George," He looked to Sam, who motioned outside. His breath left his lungs as he looked out the window, where Sapnap was looking around.

He stood up, practically running out the door.

"Sapnap!" He yelled. He didn't know what came over him, but he didn't think twice before tackling Sapnap in a hug, who readily returned it.

"Gogy!" His friend yelled back, pulling him in tighter. George never thought he'd miss the smell of his cheap cologne, but right then it was better smelling than Niki's bakery.

George pulled away, smiling so hard his cheeks hurt, Sapnap returning it, eyes glassy. “God what is wrong with you?!” George chastised, lightly smacking his chest, “Where have you been? Why didn’t you come back sooner?!”

“I’m sorry- I’m sorry,” Sapnap replied, rubbing his hand over the back of his neck, “Let’s go for a walk, we can catch up.” George nodded, tapping the glass to get Sam’s attention, motioning that he was going with Sapnap, who was obviously confused, “Okay, yeah, we definitely need to catch up, what the fuck was that about?”

George giggled, following him down the path, “I uh, it’s a lot to explain... How much do you know? About Dream?”

“I know he’s in prison, that’s the only reason I came back.”

“Okay, yeah,” George took a deep breath, trying to figure out where to even start, “A while ago, Dream was... doing something to me.” Sapnap’s eyebrows raised, “He would uh, put me asleep, anywhere from days to months.”

“Oh my god,” Sapnap gasped, “I- I had no idea.”

George shrugged, smiling softly, despite the serious conversation, “It’s okay, it’s not a big deal.” Sapnap scoffed, “Anyway, after I woke up from one of those times, I went back to L’Manburg. That’s when I learned that Dream had exiled Tommy, way far away.”

“He exiled him?!” Sapnap exclaimed, “I knew he burned down your house, and that Dream was talking about punishing him, but I didn’t know that he went that far, I left shortly after that happened.”

“Why did you leave?” George stopped, lightly grabbing his arm, “I was put asleep around that time, and when I woke up you were gone.”

Sapnap smiled softly, looking to the ground, “Remember Karl?” George nodded, “We got together. Dream was trying to get me to do things for him, before Tommy even burned down your house... I wasn’t comfortable with a lot of it, and Karl helped me realize that I could leave. Especially after you went missing, though I now know you were asleep.”

“What was he trying to get you to do?” George couldn’t help but ask. Sapnap was the most loyal person he met, especially to Dream. If he were to leave, he knew it would have to be for a good reason.

“He was building this place, like a vault. He wanted to collect all of everyone’s most prized possessions and hold them hostage. I- I just couldn’t do it.”

George shook his head, once again wondering how he could have let all of this slide by him and not notice.

“He told me that you left,” He continued, “That the reason you were gone was because you didn’t want to talk to me anymore, that this was your plan, and that you were mad I wouldn’t help.”

He wrapped his arms around him yet again, filled with complete and utter disbelief. Dream used him, he knew that, but he didn’t know he used him to manipulate Sapnap.

“I would never do that to you, Sap.” He whispered, “But I’m happy for you, that you and Karl got together, I mean.”

Sapnap chuckled, his cheeks flushing, “Yeah, he’s pretty great. We should go on a double date, if by the way Sam was looking at you earlier means anything.”

George smiled, “Yeah, about that,” Sapnap’s eyebrows rose, “After I found Tommy and got him back from exile, we went to Sam’s. It took a while, but we’re together now, too. We stole Tommy and Tubbo.”

“You *stole* them?” He laughed, “God how are they? I haven’t seen them in so long.”

“Yeah, they needed parents, so Sam and I stole them,” George explained nonchalantly, “Tommy calls me mum, even.”

Sapnap laughed harder at that, almost doubling over.

“You should come see them,” He continued, “Maybe not today, Tommy is tired, but soon. I bet Sam would love to see you, too.”

“I can’t believe you and Sam ended up together, he’s been simping over you for years. Never thought I’d see the day where he pulled his head out of his ass and asked you out.”

“I lived with him for months, took care of a child with him, and yet we just barely got together.”

“Jesus Christ.”

“Ugh, why couldn’t you have stayed away, Sap?” Tommy groaned, trying to slam the door in his face, but Sapnap pushed through, smiling brightly.

“You missed me, you can admit it,” he shot back, waving to Tubbo, who was excited to see him again, running up and hugging him, “See Tubbo can admit it! Tubbo, this is why you’re my favorite.”

Tommy scoffed, crossing his arms over his chest and glaring, “You’re so annoying,” He whistled for Fran, who came padding through the house, “Fran attack!” She sat down, head tilting, “Fran!”

Sapnap laughed loudly, rustling Tubbo’s hair, and let him go, “Where’s Sam and George?”

“They’re in their room, mum had a headache, and wanted to lay down.” As soon as the words left his mouth Tommy groaned, cheeks growing red. He forgot that Sapnap hadn’t heard him call George that before, and from his Cheshire grin, he knew he would never live it down.

“Shut up,” He hissed before Sapnap could even speak. Both him and Tubbo started laughing. “It’s not a big deal.”

“It’s sweet!” Sapnap teased, though it seemed pretty genuine too, “You call him mum -- that’s so sweet!”

“He calls Sam, dad, too.” Tubbo supplied, dodging Tommy’s fist like it was second nature.

Tommy huffed, his glare increasing, “You will too, Tubbo, just wait.”

Sapnap chuckled, moving further into the house like it was his own, Tommy rolled his eyes, but he followed him to the couch. Tubbo settled on Sapnap’s other side.

“Wait, does that make me your uncle?!” Sapnap exclaimed. Tommy’s head dropped into his hand with a groan. “Oh my god, I’m your uncle!”

“No!” Tommy huffed “No you’re not, we are *not* related in any way!”

“Tommy, don’t talk that way to our uncle,” Tubbo joined in, giggling maniacally when Tommy dropped his face into the pillows, “You can be *my* uncle, Sap.”

“There we go! Thank you, my favorite nephew.”

Tubbo was adjusting well to his new home, really he was. He was having a lot of fun living with his best friend, plus Sam and George were really nice and always made sure he was comfortable.

But he couldn’t help the small amounts of doubt that ebbed in his chest, despite everything good.

He was waiting for the other shoe to drop, waiting for the catch. Nothing good ever lasts, he knew that much.

Sam and George were nice to take him in, but he realized something when he was waiting for Tommy to come back out of the prison. He saw how worried George was about him, and he knew that no matter how nice they were to take him in, they would never care about him like they did Tommy.

It shouldn’t bother him, it really shouldn’t. Tommy had been living with them longer, they were obviously going to be closer.

But every time Tommy called them dad or mum, he envied him. Just the thought of using those names made his stomach churn. He couldn’t make them uncomfortable, he didn’t want to go back to living by himself.

He paced in his room, knowing full well that everyone else was asleep. Why couldn’t he just be normal and sleep? He hated feeling like this.

A light knock at his door broke him from his thoughts, it soon cracked, and George stepped through, visibly confused to see him up and out of bed. Of course, this was his luck.

“I uh, I just wanted to check on you, I had a weird feeling...” he explained, Tubbo bit his lip, taking a step back, “Are you okay?”

He nodded, clearing his throat, “Yeah, I- I’m fine, you can go back to sleep, George.”

George took a step forward, eyebrows pinched, “You’re not fine, Tubbo, what’s wrong?”

“Just can’t sleep,” He replied, not exactly lying but obviously not being honest. He didn’t need to look at George to know he didn’t believe him.

After a second, George walked to his bed, lifting up the covers and sliding underneath them, “C’mon,” he said simply, patting the other side of the bed, Tubbo froze, “Tommy used to have trouble sleeping, too, this always helped.”

Tubbo swallowed thickly, not sure what he should do. He didn’t want to bother George, but he couldn’t lie, he always slept easier with someone next to him. He yawned, George patted the bed again, shifting to open up the blanket for him.

“What’s keeping you up?” George asked as he climbed into bed, being careful not to get too close and crowd the man. He was being nice, he didn’t want to annoy him further. Though it was clear when George pulled him closer that he didn’t care.

He was already tired, but when George started massaging his scalp he felt himself relax further, eyelids drooping, "I, I don't know."

"Yes you do," George replied, the rise and fall of his chest lulling Tubbo into a warm sense of security. No wonder Tommy was always latched onto him, George was really comforting. "Talk to me."

"I was thinking... about you and Sam," He admitted, heart racing, "Why did you guys ask me to move in? You already have Tommy."

George sighed, his fingers gently combing through Tubbo's hair, "Sam wanted you to move in the second he met you at the prison grounds," Tubbo's eyebrows raised, "He needed to keep you safe - he's protective like that."

"I was scared to have you come live with us if I'm being honest," George continued, Tubbo looked up at him, "I've gotten so used to Tommy and Sam, worrying about them. I was scared that I wouldn't be able to keep you safe and happy."

"What changed?"

"Nothing, really, I'm still worried about you guys, almost always, Tommy calls me a mother hen," Tubbo snorted, "I guess he's right, but Tubbo, we're glad you're here. I'm glad you're here."

"What's goin' on?"

Tubbo and George both looked to the doorway, where Sam was leaning against it, smiling softly. He felt a lot calmer after his conversation with George, but he was still nervous.

"He wanted to know why we wanted him here," George explained, hand stilling on his head.

Sam walked closer, sitting on the side of the bed and rubbing Tubbo's shoulders. He smiled at the contact.

"We kidnap teenagers, didn't ya know?" Sam joked, leaning over to kiss George, Tubbo made a face, "We're family now, Tubbo," he continued, this far more genuine. "If you ever want to go back to L'Manburg, you can, but we'd love to have you here for as long as you'd like."

Tubbo sniffled, sinking further into George's side. He had a family now. Though it would take a while before he could ever be able to call them dad or mum. But he knew they would be patient.

He fell asleep shortly after.

Sam threaded his fingers through George's hair, the two cuddling on their couch, a small blanket thrown over the top of them.

"We need to get up, love," Sam whispered, George shook his head, nuzzling his face against his chest, making him chuckle, "I know, but we need to get dinner started."

"Make the boys cook," George mumbled, exhaling sharply and looking up to meet his eyes, they both knew he would cave and make dinner, but that didn't stop him from putting it off.

The warm arm around his side pulled him closer, George just wanted to take a nap. Sam was gone all day, fulfilling his duties as the warden, George couldn't help but feel a little needy. He missed him.

“If the boys cooked our house would burn down,” Sam laughed, “Just slide off of me and I’ll take care of it.”

“Mm, no.” George shot back, tightening his hold on Sam, readjusting so he was completely on top of him, “No moving. I’m warm.”

Sam finally resigned, kissing the top of his head, “I can never say no to you.” George giggled, leaning up and kissing him.

“Mum! Dad! Where are you?!”

Both of them startled, shooting up at Tommy’s loud voice, the teenager ran into the house. George’s stomach dropped, where was Tubbo?

“What happened?” Sam asked, equally as panicked as George, who quickly stood up from the couch and ran to him, looking for injuries.

Tommy faltered, eyebrows raised and head tilting, “What? He’s outside, but I just need a fish -- right now.”

Sam and George shared a look, “A fish? What for?”

The blonde smiled, directing them back outside, where Tubbo was petting a stray cat. George laughed, relieved that Tubbo wasn’t bleeding out or dead, “Tommy there’s some fish in the barrel by the ocean.” He explained, sharing a smile with Sam, it looked like they were getting their cat after all.

Tommy ran to the barrel, nose curling at the smell of fish, but he grabbed one regardless and slowly made his way to the cat, who was rubbing against Tubbo’s side.

“What should we name it?” Tubbo asked, rubbing behind its ears, “I think whiskers.”

“That’s original, Tubbo,” Tommy teased, laying down the cod in front of the cat, who immediately perked up, “How’d you think of that one?”

Sam knelt down, reaching out towards the grey cat, sharing a look with George. “Newspaper.” He said, “Its name is newspaper.”

Both boys frowned at the name, but George smiled, sitting next to Sam’s side.

“Hi, new newspaper,” he cooed, “Welcome to the family.”

Tommy was running along the paths of L’Manburg, Fran trailing behind. He had been taking her exploring far more often, as he enjoyed the fresh air and the silence.

He giggled as he hopped up onto a short wall, eyes lighting up as he saw pretty flowers growing on the other side.

He leaned over, reaching to pluck one of the flowers, a small daffodil, when he lost his balance. But he didn’t fall, as two arms grabbed his side and pulled him back up to sit on the wall.

“Thank you-” his words died on his tongue when he met the red eyes of Technoblade, who leaned down shortly after to pet the dog. Techno always had a soft spot for animals. “Technoblade.”

“Tommy.” The man returned, standing up and sitting next to him. Tommy scooted away. “I’m not

going to hurt you, Tommy.”

“Why are you here?” Tommy asked, chewing his lip, “I thought you lived far away from here.”

Techno hummed, leaning back on his hands, staring into the distance, “I’m here to talk to you, actually.” Tommy swallowed thickly, “Dream is in prison, congratulations.”

“I’m surprised you heard about that,” He replied. It was honest, he hadn’t heard from or seen Philza and Technoblade in a long time, he thought for sure they were off the grid and never coming back.

The man sighed, chuckling slightly, “I have friends, still, Tommy.”

“You do?”

“Eh- kinda,” Techno pulled a piece of jerky from a pocket, tossing it to Fran, “Since when do you have a dog?”

Tommy relaxed slightly, he knew Techno was one of the most dangerous people on the server, but for some reason, he believed that he wouldn’t hurt him.

“She’s Sams, well also mine, kinda, it’s complicated,” Techno raised an eyebrow, Tommy huffed, “I live with Sam, now.”

A gust of wind blew past the two, Tommy pulled his legs to his chest, “I’m a good guy, Techno.” The hybrid turned to him, waiting for him to continue. Tommy could spot the faint scars on his face that he had seen all those years ago, covered by ones far fresher. “I know you said the good guy never has a happy ending, but I do. I have a family now, and we - we’re happy.”

He didn’t know why he was telling him this, a small part of him still felt the need to prove himself. Technoblade only nodded, looking back in front of him.

“I’m glad, Theseus.” Technoblade replied earnestly, shocking Tommy slightly. “This world can change people, I’m glad it didn’t change you.”

Chapter End Notes

hi :)

it's the end of an era

o7

Epilogue

Chapter Summary

bonding

"I just don't really see the point, to be honest," George huffed, leaning back on his hands as he watched Dream 'negotiate' with Wilbur and his annoying younger brother, "If they want to leave and make a new nation, why is that such a big deal?"

Sapnap sighed, wiping the sweat off of his forehead and laying his head on George's shoulders, he shrugged him off.

"Dream likes to be in charge, you should know that by now." Sapnap replied, scooting so he could lay his head in George's lap. He rolled his eyes, knowing shoving him off again wouldn't do anything. "I do wish he'd hurry, though. It's hot as dick out here."

"What's he going to do if he doesn't get his way?" He asked, although he knew the answer. Dream wasn't the type to give up without a fight.

Sapnap hummed, picking at his nails, "He's prepared to go to war." He replied nonchalantly.

George swallowed, meeting the eyes of the blonde teenager only meters from them. "I hope you are too."

"War..." He repeated, a flash of doubt crossing his mind. The teenager, Tommy, was only that, a teenager. But he trusted Dream, if this was what he thought was right, it must be.

"It's stupid! That's what it is!" Dream yelled, going on a tangent about L'Manburg for the fourth time that day. Usually George could get him to bother Sapnap, who was always looking to suck up to their friend, but it seemed even he had had enough. "I mean, who would even want to be in that nation, with the- the hotdog van and the costumes for uniforms!"

George let him continue, inserting the necessary 'yeah, you're right' and 'mhms', letting his focus drift out of the community house, a small smile growing on his lips.

Newspaper was outside, laying on the wooden pathway, sprawled out in the warm afternoon sun. He missed Sam, but at least the cat didn't leave him.

"George."

He looked back to Dream, who had a dangerous glint in his eyes.

"Yeah?"

"I have an idea..." He said carefully, standing up straight, "We need an inside man."

George sighed, staring up at the clouded skies, grass sticking to the backs of his legs and arms. Not far from him, Sapnap and Dream sparred, the sounds of wooden swords hitting each other ruining his peace.

He never understood how the two were always fighting, sparring, ready to go. He was exhausted just watching them.

"It's incredible, really!" Dream cheered, clearly not putting as much dedication into the fight as usual. Sapnap, however, was still struggling to match him, "They're never going to see it coming! Tommy's going to wish he stayed in that cavern, and Tubbo will certainly never trust anyone again."

George propped himself up, eyebrows furrowing. He didn't like how much fun Dream had in these 'wars', especially when he found himself against the two boys. They were annoying, sure, but they should be able to relax and enjoy their remaining childhood.

"What are you talking about?" He asked, a chill breeze blowing through the field, if he focused, he could almost smell the apple blossoms of the upcoming harvest.

Dream and Sapnap both faced him, resigning their match and sitting on either side of him. George liked it that way, it put them on even ground.

"Don't you worry about it, Georgie," Dream said, ruffling his hair. George smacked it away, laying back down and ignoring the flush in his cheeks, "Don't you worry at all, I'm just keeping us safe."

"What the fuck is wrong with you?!" George yelled, jabbing Dream's armored chest, the swirling purple netherite sending jolts of energy up his arm, "Why would you do that to me?! We're supposed to be friends!"

Hot, frustrated tears streamed down his cheeks, his arms shaking.

Dream looked bored.

"How can I trust you- when you, when you just put me to sleep whenever you feel like it?!"

Eventually, Dream grabbed George's wrist, shoving it away from his chest, but twisting to interlock his fingers with his own. The action confused George even more. It was uncomfortable, but somehow affectionate at the same time.

"Now, now, Georgie, you know I'd never hurt you," Dream replied, light and clear, like they were talking about the weather, "I did what I had to do to keep you safe, you can't trust Quackity."

George scoffed, pulling his hand away from Dream's. But the taller man only tightened his grip.

"God George, why do you have to be so fucking self-absorbed all the time?" Dream spat suddenly. George flinched away, his eyes shooting to the ground. Suddenly he doubted his decision to confront him, he hated when Dream got angry.

"I mean, I look after you, I bring you armor and food, I protect you-" Dream continued, exasperated, George sniffled, "I give you the first real rest you've had in ages, and you get mad at me?"

George shook his head, small cries rising up in his throat, as humiliating as it was, "I never asked

you to do that."

Dream sighed, suddenly bringing him in closer, wrapping his arms around him. George sought out his heartbeat, the sound comforting him. "I know, I know, but it's just what I do for the people I love."

He raised his eyes, meeting Dream's green. His heart was racing, he was still so mad, but did he really have a right to be mad?

"I love you too, Dream."

George stared at the soot stained stage, tears brimming in his eyes. His stomach churned, the smell of ash and gunpowder burned his lungs.

"You should have seen it, Gogy," Jack said. George flinched, not noticing his arrival, "Fireworks everywhere, screams... Tubbo's screams-"

He shook his head, cutting him off. He didn't want to hear about it, he couldn't. Tubbo didn't deserve to be burned, publicly, because of a president that had only gone into power because he slept through an election.

Jack exhaled sharply, turning to face him. George kept his eyes forward, he couldn't look at him.

"So where were you, anyways?"

"This place is insane, Sam," George said, voice filled with awe as he toured the man's house, "This must have taken so long to build."

Sam shrugged, trying to stay nonchalant, but it was obvious he thrived on the praise, "It's not that cool... It's just fully automated farms, furnaces, potions and a door only I can access..."

George snorted, playfully shoving his side. Sam only laughed.

"I missed you, George." He admitted, cheeks brushed with the lightest shade of pink, "I've missed talking to you, and uh- seeing you."

He smiled in response, wondering just how much Sam knew about everything. He wondered if he knew, would he still have come back?

"You're the one that left Sam," He teased, ignoring the voice inside of him that told him to tell Sam the truth, about how bad it had gotten without him, "Why'd you come back, if you don't mind me asking?"

Sam took a deep breath, leaning against a wall. His house was empty then, but George knew as soon as he got some furniture it would be incredibly cozy.

Eventually, his friend answered, "I realized something, I guess." George raised an eyebrow. Sam continued. "I realized that it's worth getting a little bit of what you want rather than none at all."

George huffed, still incredibly confused, "Okay, stay vague then."

Sam only chuckled, eyes shifting from George's and onto the ground.

"I was thinking-" His friend continued, "I have a lot of room here, and I know you don't really

have a place to stay..." He met George's eyes again, "Move in with me, I'd love the company."

"I'd love to, Sam."

"You're living with Sam, now? Really?"

George winced, knowing that after Sam's return, Dream still harbored hard feelings for the man. He just wished they could get along.

"Yeah, I mean, he has the space-" He replied, trying to sound confident, sure of himself, but Dream's intense stare always made him question himself, "And he wants company," Dream scoffed, "And we're friends, I uh, I missed him."

"You missed him?" Dream's tone was cold as ice, George chewed his lip, fingers playing with the hem of his shirt. "Am I not enough for you?"

He frowned, anxiety pooling in his stomach, "What? No, that's not what I meant."

Dream sighed, his eyes falling to the ground, making George feel even worse. He really didn't mean to hurt his feelings, he just missed his friend.

"I mean, my feelings aside," Dream continued, refusing to look at George. He felt like shit, reaching out for him, taking his hand, Dream's lip twitched. "He lives so far away, do you really want to make that commute all the time? We'll see each other so much less... Is that what you want?"

George shook his head. Dream was right, Sam did live far.

"Yeah, yeah you're right," He couldn't help but match Dream's smile at the words, "I'll tell him I changed my mind or something."

George smiled, admiring his first real build. It was about time he got a house, and it was a nice one at that, the reds and whites of the mushroom contrasting just right. He was proud of himself.

Until a loud explosion shook the ground, the lanterns hanging from his roof swaying, his balance almost overturned.

He looked in the direction it had come from, and sure enough, there was a large smoke plume over L'Manburg.

"What the-" He stood up, new house forgotten, running to L'Manburg as fast as his feet would take him.

Nothing could have prepared him for what he saw, Philza, standing over Wilbur's lifeless body, Tommy and Tubbo charging at Technoblade, swords drawn, and two withers in the sky.

"George!"

He looked to the side, heart hammering in his chest, wide-eyed as he met Dream's gaze.

"What are you doing here?!"

"I- I was-" He dodged a wither, grabbing his bow and aiming, but Dream grabbed his arm, shaking his head. Why didn't Dream want the wither gone?

“You were supposed to stay away, George.” His friend chastised, barely audible over TNT blasts and screams.

He tried to step forward to help, but Dream pulled him back, “This is why I put you to sleep.” He bit out, “You need to leave.”

“What? Dream I’m not leaving, they need help!” He pulled again, Watching Technoblade knock Tommy to the ground, pulling out his own sword.

“This needs to happen, George.”

He shook his head, gasping as Tommy narrowly missed the blade of Techno’s sword, Tubbo getting his attention by coming in from the side, burn scars prominent even through his armor.

“They’re just kids!”

“They’re our enemies!”

George pulled away from him again, tears filling his eyes. He needed to help, he needed to do something.

Dream sighed, pulling something out of his inventory. Next thing George knew, everything was black.

George sniffled, wiping his cheek with the fabric of his sweater.

Before him, his burned house, mushroom melted and black from the fire that had consumed his cottage.

The smell was the worst part, it coated his lungs, burned his nose. But he couldn’t move. His house was gone, along with his belongings. He didn’t want to restart, he just wanted to lay down and cry.

“George? What happened?”

He sniffled again, trying to stop the tears, but as soon as Dream stepped forward and opened his arms, he broke down.

“I-I don’t know-” He cried, “I don’t know why anyone would do this, Dream!”

His friend held him, rubbing small circles into his back.

They stayed like that for a while, until George calmed down, his cries now soft whimpers and sniffles.

Dream pulled away slightly, grabbing his chin and tilting his head up to look him in the eyes, “I’m going to take care of this, George.” He promised. George didn’t want to think about what that meant. “I’m going to keep you safe.”

“George.”

“George?”

“George!”

He jumped awake, Sapnap standing above him, hands grabbing his shoulders.

“God- finally!” His friend exclaimed, “I’ve been trying to wake you up for *ages* .”

George rolled his eyes, but he sat up, noting the empty space in his bed, panic rising in his chest. “What’s going on? Where’s Sam?”

Sapnap laughed, pulling away from George, sitting by his side on the edge of the bed. “Don’t worry about it, but I need you to get dressed and come with me.”

“For what?”

“God stop asking questions and just do it,” Sapnap teased, grabbing the blanket and throwing it off of him, “I don’t know how Sam puts up with you.”

George rolled his eyes, flipping him off lightheartedly, he got up and grabbed his clothes, “You better not be leading me into a trap or something.”

“A trap?” His friend replied, almost cackling, “Do you think I’m a child?”

“Yes, absolutely.”

This time, Sapnap flipped him off.

George completely ignored his own clothing in the dresser and closet, stealing Sam’s like he always did. No one was surprised by it anymore. Honestly, it was more shocking to see him wearing his own.

“Sapnap?” He asked, fingers playing with the hem of his shirt.

“Yeah?”

He inhaled sharply, trying to think of the best way to phrase what he was thinking, “Do you ever- do you ever think about the past?”

“Not really, no,” Sapnap answered earnestly, “There’s no use in dwelling on the things that happened in the past, we’re alive *now*, and that’s what matters.”

George hummed, leading him out of the bedroom, “No one is here...” He mumbled, glaring at Sap, “Tell me again what’s going on?”

Sapnap huffed, practically shoving him to the front door, “No questions, Gogy.” George rolled his eyes. “Why’d you ask me about the past? What’s on your mind?”

He always liked his and Sapnap’s friendship, teasing and sarcastic. But since he’d come back, they’ve been a lot kinder to another, he appreciated that.

“I used to love Dream,” Sapnap nodded, waiting for him to continue as they made their way towards the portal, “I really- I saw a future with him.”

“But now you’re with Sam.”

“Now I’m with Sam.”

They materialized in the nether, and made their way to the ice bridge. Sapnap faced him again, right before getting into a boat, “Are you having second thoughts? About being with him?”

George shook his head, that was the last thing on his mind.

“No, I- I just mean that we've all changed so much. I loved Dream, and I trusted him, and now he's gone.” Sapnap nodded, sending the boat forward after he got in, “I'm just wondering, how do I know if I made the right decision?”

“Right decision?”

“Ugh how do I say this?” He groaned, “I was so sure I would be with Dream forever, and now he's gone. And now I'm sure about Sam, Tommy, and Tubbo... How can I be sure that won't change, too?”

Sapnap sighed, and a comfortable silence fell between them. He knew his friend was just finding his words so he waited patiently. As weird as it was to be open about his feelings.

“How long have you felt this way?” Sapnap eventually asked. George thought about it.

“I don't know,” He replied honestly, “For a couple weeks, I guess. Sam has been talking a lot about the future. It's brought a lot of stuff back to the surface.”

Sapnap hummed, the boat coming to a stop. They stepped out, slowly making their way to the second portal.

“I think there's no way to know for sure,” His friend replied, “I- There's no way to be sure the decisions you've made are right, but can I ask you something, Gogy?” George nodded, “Are you happy?”

They stepped into the portal, quickly materializing back into the overworld. George waited for Sapnap to lead him in a direction, but he held still, grabbing his wrist, waiting for an answer.

“I am, yeah.” He replied earnestly, letting a small smile take his lips, “I'm the happiest I've ever been.”

Sapnap smiled, “Then that's all that matters. There's always going to be ‘what ifs’ and ‘if onlys’, but the one thing you can count on is family.” George fought the tears that filled his eyes, “And let me tell you-” Sapnap continued, taking on a teasing tone, “You've got one hell of a family on your side. Your boys would kill anyone who hurt you.”

He snorted, taking a deep breath. Sapnap was right, everything in the past didn't matter, because he had everything and everyone he had ever wanted *now*. He should enjoy it.

“No- seriously! I swear Tommy was going to shank me the other day!”

“You probably deserved it,” He shot back, bumping Sapnap's side with his shoulder, “Now where are we going?”

Sapnap smiled brightly, leading him down the path towards the community house. The windows were filled with flowers and books, obscuring his view inside. That was new.

George stepped onto the wooden path, the old wood creaking under his weight, he looked to the same spot he saw Newspaper last, taking a second to go forward. He paid his respects, to both the cat, and to how far he had come, before following Sapnap forward.

“Can you at least give me a hint-”

His words died on his tongue as they stepped inside, eyes widening, mouth agape.

The community house was filled with an assortment of wildflowers, candles filling the empty spaces. By the pillar in the center stood Sam, with Tommy and Tubbo on either side, wearing matching smiles and suits.

Sapnap patted his back, shooting him a grin, and Sam a thumbs up, before stepping back outside.

“Sam?” He whispered, heart hammering in his chest. He was already emotional from his conversation with Sapnap, and he knew he wasn't going to last what was about to happen.

Tommy was practically bouncing on the balls of his feet, Tubbo fiddling with his fingers, but both smiling brighter than he had ever seen before.

Sam however, was perfectly still, eyes glimmering with gentle adoration.

George took a step closer, his feet heavy, unable to break his eye contact with Sam.

“George, hi-” He greeted, almost shy, like he hadn't been leaving marks on his chest the night before, “I uh- You look good.”

Both him and the two boys laughed, making Sam blush even harder.

“Get it together, big man,” Tommy whispered, shooting a thumbs up at George like he couldn't hear them.

“Right- yeah, okay,” Sam mumbled, before clearing his throat, “George, I've loved you since the day we met-”

George inhaled shakily, trying to stop himself from crying in the first sentence. He knew this was coming, but that didn't make it any easier.

“-I've seen you go through things no one should imagine, and you've remained kind and strong throughout all of it.”

He sniffled, swallowing thickly. His cheeks hurt from smiling but he didn't want to stop.

“I've seen how you've taken care of our boys, and nothing warms my heart more.”

Tubbo, who was standing to the side of him, reached out for his hand. George took it, squeezing it, and letting go, giving both him and Tommy a smile.

“You've brought so much joy into my life-” Sam kneeled down, getting on one knee and pulling out a box, a ring glimmering inside, “And I can't imagine my life with anyone else.”

George cried freely then, wiping his tears on the back of his hand.

“Will you marry me?”

George nodded fervently, swallowing his tears, before mumbling, “I mean, we're basically already married but sure.”

Tommy and Tubbo wasted no time in tackling them in a hug, and soon Sapnap was inside doing the same thing, with tears of his own.

George had never been happier.

George had never been more nervous.

He sat on the foot of his bed, almost shaking as he stared at his reflection in the mirror, dressed up in a tux.

“You look like you're about to pass out, George, relax.” Quackity teased, though from how fast his heart was beating, he thought he just might.

Niki, who was straightening his tie, smacked Quackity, before rubbing George's shoulder, “Everything is okay, George,” She reminded, “Sam is helplessly in love with you, and you him. There's no need to stress.”

He nodded, fingers clenching and unclenching the covers of the bed beneath him.

A knock came from the door, Quackity got up quickly, opening it just enough to see who was there. Tommy, Tubbo and Sapnap all pushed through, practically shoving Quackity out of the way.

“Aww, Gogy, you look so cute!” Sapnap cooed, “You're all grown up!”

George glared at him, but he was immensely grateful he was there. He almost felt nostalgic, getting dressed up in tuxedos with his oldest friend, getting ready to get married.

“They have the yard set up,” Tommy informed, lips pulled into a grin. Him and Tubbo have both been so happy since Sam proposed, it made their situation a lot more real, permanent. “There's so many flowers, mum, you're going to love it.”

Tubbo nodded, eyes bright, “Dad looked like he was going to throw up, though.”

“Good,” George replied, laughing slightly, pulling both teenagers on either side of him, wrapping his arms around their shoulders, “Are you guys ready? Last chance to run away, I bet Niki would take us in, right Niki?”

Niki laughed, nodding playfully, “Obviously.”

“What about me George?!” Quackity exclaimed, “I'm right here!”

“And?”

Sapnap laughed, his eyes lingering on Quackity a second too long. George had noticed both his and Karl's longing looks to the man, and wished they would just talk about their feelings already.

“You're not going to back out are you?” Tubbo asked, rubbing the exposed scar on the back of his hand. George took it in his own, squeezing it.

“Of course not,” He answered, Tommy slouched against his side, leaning his head on his shoulder, “You're going to cause a wrinkle, Toms.” He said, but neither moved.

Another knock came from the door, this time being Karl to signify it was time.

Niki, Quackity and Sapnap left, wishing him luck and giving him one last hug.

“Are you ready, mum?” Tubbo asked. Tommy looked at him, waiting for an answer too.

“Yeah, yeah I'm ready.”

He took one more deep breath, standing and brushing the nonexistent dirt off of his slacks. Tommy and Tubbo linked their arms on his, peeking outside the door to make sure Sam wasn't around.

His heart beat faster and faster with every step, and he routinely had to stop and remind himself to breathe.

There wasn't a doubt in his mind that he wanted to do this, marry Sam, make it official. Sam was it for him.

But after the next few steps, after he made it outside, it was all real. It was happening, and it was permanent.

He inhaled sharply, squeezing his boy's arms.

"This is it, huh?"

Tommy smiled, bumping into his side lightly, "This is it. Are you ready to become Mr. George Awesamdude?"

George's nose curled.

Tubbo laughed. "No, no, no, it's Sam Notfound."

"We'll worry about that later," George chuckled, taking another long breath, "Once I find the confidence to walk out there and marry him."

"He's the love of your life, Gogs," Tubbo said, pulling him slightly closer to the door, "Everything will be fine."

"Yeah- happy ever after and all that shit," Tommy agreed, "But you can't get your happy ever after if you don't take the first step."

George nodded, swallowing thickly, before motioning for them to open the oak doors.

He felt breathless taking in their yard. Originally he was unsure about the location, but seeing it now, he was glad he agreed.

Two rows of chairs lined both sides of the aisle, which was lined with flower petals and candles, leading up to the altar, soft music playing in the background.

Standing at the front, was his best man, Sapnap, and on the other side, Ponk, Badboyhalo in the middle. But that's not what he cared about, because standing in front of Ponk was Sam.

He looked incredible, black suit tailored perfectly, showing off how tall and muscular he really was.

Sam's head turned to him, and as soon as they made eye contact, George went on autopilot.

The two boys led him down the aisle, and while he vaguely noticed his friends smiling from their seats, all he could focus on was Sam.

Sam's warm expression squashed any small doubts he had left. He was smiling, but his eyes were soft, as they got closer George could see the tears in his eyes. He felt his own coming, too

When they got to the front, Tubbo and Tommy split off, Tommy going behind Sapnap, and Tubbo behind Ponk, giving George one last hug beforehand.

“Hey.” Sam smiled, hand immediately reaching out for his. His hands were warm, where his were cold. Sam liked dogs, where he preferred cats. He liked fruit, but Sam liked chocolate. They were so different, but in all the best ways.

George exhaled slowly, the world around him fading away as he looked into Sam's eyes. He was perfect.

“Hi.”

And as they exchanged vows, then rings, then a kiss, George was certain that he'd found his happy ending - content with his life of two teenage sons, a cat, a dog, a husband he adored and a lifetime supply of chocolate croissants.

End Notes

hi ily

Works inspired by this ~~one~~ [Daddy Makes Divorce 1000% Funnier](#) by [SneakyToni](#)

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!